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Learn to Play Go

Volume V: The Palace of Memory



Janice Kim 3 dan

with Jeong Soo-hyun 9 dan

The Korean Go Association's
Learn to Play Go

Volume V: The Palace of Memory

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with Jeong Soo-hyun 9 dan

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WHY “THE PALACE OF MEMORY”?

One of the great things about the game of Go is there really isn't that much to memorize. This book pretty much covers what I remember learning as a student at the Korean Go Academy. These memories, which form the guidelines in this book, are for me a bit like the crystal that originates Superman's Fortress of Solitude - it's one little piece of a lost world that contains the whole structure. I hope they will help you in the construction of your own Go memory palace.

A few notes on the text:

As in previous volumes, to avoid some pronoun awkwardness I've kept to the convention of referring to White as female and Black as male – unless, of course, we're talking about specific real-life players.

There's one idea I've been thinking about trying out for some time, and in this book I've gone ahead and done it: instead of referring to areas on the board using the terms “left, right, top, and bottom,” in this volume we'll refer to these respectively as west, east, north, and south. After hearing Go Seigen instruct his students to “consider all six sides of the board,” I now tend to think about the Go board as a three-dimensional pyramid as opposed to a two-dimensional plane. In Go Seigen's more insightful way of thinking, top and bottom should really refer only to the center and the edges.

The heart of this book is the “Templates of Fighting.” This (perhaps disturbingly) short beginning section encapsulates my thoughts about what I've observed in my fifteen years of professional Go playing. I considered calling it “My System”, a la Nimzovitch, but among other things that sounded a bit like an alimentary discussion (not suitable for sharing) rather than my elementary operating theory, which I do hope to share with you.

Much of this book is based on my teacher Jeong Soo-hyun's original Go instruction books first published in Korean, and on my recollections of the many things he taught me while I was a Go student in Korea. Of course, I manage any errors and confusion all by myself.

Many thanks to Mike Samuel, my dear friend and remarkably gifted graphic designer, without whom this book would seriously have never seen the light of day; to my husband Bruce Price, who read drafts and stayed up with a newborn every night so I could finally finish; Brian D'Amato who inspires, never tires, and edits; Sergej Zoubok who kept the good ship Samarkand afloat; Trish McMillan who rescued the dogs from neglect; DeeDee Lee who inspired the illustrations; students past and present, who clarified what I was struggling to say; and all the readers of the Learn to Play Go series, who gave invaluable help and encouragement.

Janice Kim
April 1, 2003

PREFACE	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
INTRODUCTION	1
THE TEMPLATES OF FIGHTING	4
GUIDELINES OF SHAPE	14
1 Attach, Hane	14
2 The Tiger's Mouth	19
3 The One-Point Jump	23
4 Jump-Cut the Knight's Move	27
5 Cut, Extend	33
6 Prevent the Bamboo Joint	39
7 The Empty Triangle	43
8 Sacrifice Two	49
9 Cap, Knight's Move	57
10 The Center of Symmetry	61
11 Peep, Connect	67
12 Hit the Head of Two (or Three)	72
13 The Squeeze	76
14 The Star Capture	81
OPENING GUIDES	86
1 Play in the Corners in One of Five Ways	87
2 Enclose or Approach "Unbalanced" Corners	91
3 After the Corners, Play on the Sides	99
4 Extensions Looking Towards Invasions	103
5 Enlarge and Protect (or Reduce and Invade)	104
6 Balance: Influence vs. Profit	107
7 Find Your Good Side	110
8 Make a Base	116
9 Stay Away From Strength	121

OPENING: TEST YOURSELF	124
JUNGSUK	146
1 The Star Point	149
2 The 3-4 Point	157
3 Other Common Jungsuk	171
THE ENDGAME	176
1 But First, What is Endgame?	176
2 Sente and Gote	178
3 How to Calculate the Size of Endgame Moves	182
4 Hunting Big Endgame	190
ENDGAME GUIDES	199
1 Locate Endgame First	200
2 Take and Keep Sente	201
3 Base Related Moves are Urgent	202
4 Watch your Liberties	204
5 Watch the Safety of Your Stones	208
6 Save the Endgame for the Endgame	210
ENDGAME: TEST YOURSELF	211
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	225

There are some things we “just know” about Go. Everyone who plays at a certain level knows them. Learning these things doesn’t require a huge feat of memory, but an understanding of some principles of the opening and the endgame and of something called, vaguely, “shape”.

If you have a grasp of these concepts – and if you can apply them – you have 80% of the skill of a world champion. This sounds impressive, but actually it’s not saying that much. In Go, there’s a fine line between genius and idiocy. What this knowledge does offer, though, is way to look at a board and see only two or three possibilities, rather than the dozens confronted by a beginning-level player, or the rapidly-exploding probability tree that a computer attempts to crunch.

Advanced players probably have an easier time of it than beginners because when they’re trying to decide on a move they automatically discard most possibilities without even thinking about it. One way to do this is to follow shape guidelines. A “checklist” of these guidelines gives you a place to start and often a good hint as to what is going to be the best move.

First of all, what do we mean by “shape”? “Good shape” is an intersection between tactics and strategy. Tactically, you want your stones to act in the most efficient, effective way possible. Strategically, you are trying to surround: after all, the translation of the Chinese word for Go is “the surrounding game.”

But you can’t hope to win by just trying to surround your territory, because you have an opponent who will foil your attempts. To surround more territory than your opponent, you have to surround your opponent’s territory.

This may sound cryptic, but you don’t have to be from Planet Zen to do it. In fact you would probably do it naturally in a real-life situation. Consider the following example. Imagine a one-square mile of valuable land. Both you and a rival have a claim to it. You could just divide it in half, but instead you agree to draw the border using a test of horsemanship. Each of you has a saddlebag that lets out a small stream of white or black pebbles to mark your border. At high noon both of you take off. If you and your rival are riding neck and neck at furious speed, the right strategy will immediately become obvious:

GET IN FRONT AND CUT 'EM OFF!

Doing this effectively and efficiently is the essence of making good shape. Let's see how this translates into stones on the grid.

As described in Volume II, *The Way of the Moving Horse*, there are six basic relationships between stones: the stretch, the diagonal, the one-point jump, the knight's move, the two-point jump, and the large knight's move.

These relationships are called *haengma* in Korean. This word, translated roughly as "the way of the moving horse," shows the Korean emphasis on thinking of a group of stones as a horse moving across the playing field of the board, rather than of each move being an individual unit.

According to this model, a move is decided not so much on its location but on its relationship to previously placed stones. Choosing where you place your stones is akin to choosing between a fast horse and a strong horse. When you put stones right next to each other they are very strong, but they lack speed. Ideally, you want to move as fast as you can without losing strength. In Go terms, this means that you want to surround as much territory as possible without losing connectivity.

In practice, when you are trying to manage a whole board sometimes you'll give up connectivity to gain territory somewhere else. To continue the equine metaphor, this is somewhat akin to letting the wolves bring down a weak horse to gain time for the others.

So it's not just the parts of the horse that have a relationship to one another: the wolves – that is, your opponent's stones – also have a relationship to the horse. They are in fact the same six basic relationships, with of course a whole new and menacing meaning. And, since the relationship between the two stones is now a hostile one, we give them new names. Instead of stretching, we have attaching, and instead of the diagonal, we have the shoulder hit. The one-point jump becomes the one-point approach; the knight's move becomes the knight's-move approach. The two-point jump becomes the two-point approach, and, finally, the large knight's move becomes the large knight's approach.

Most, if not all, of your moves (except for the earliest "sketching" or "outpost" moves in the opening of the game) should be one of these basic shapes. This is your "tool kit" of moves.

As more stones are added and fighting begins, the shapes will crystallize into patterns that

I call the “Templates of Fighting.” These are assemblages of seemingly unrelated “good shapes” that I’ve found constantly recurring in positions between skilled players.

The Templates of Fighting are like forms in the martial arts. Watching a martial arts demonstration, you see how a kind of idealized fight might look if both combatants were fighting in the most effective way. Just mimicking what you see is a good first step to learning how to fight well. Next, as you practice the forms, your muscles “memorize” the moves and how they fit together. In an actual fight, of course, you won’t robotically go through the form, but hopefully you won’t be just flailing your arms either: you’ll use elements of the forms, sometimes modifying them a bit to fit the specific situation.

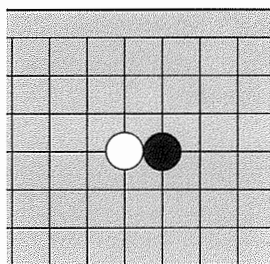
Now, you could just memorize the Templates and discover on your own how they form the basis of good shape and how they can guide good play. However, I’m going to follow them up with a section covering fourteen specific “Guidelines of Shape.” In my case I learned the Guidelines and then much later made up the Templates, but luckily now that I’m writing it all up myself, I can present the proof first and then the pudding.

To construct the Templates of Fighting, I divided fights into categories based on the basic relationship between the stones in conflict, and then into subcategories based on the size of the fighting force. Going back to our menacing wolves, remember that there are six relationships they can have to the horse. The closer the wolves are, the more threatening they become. A stone two points away is actually pretty far off – too distant to be an immediate threat – so the two-point approach and the large knight’s-move approach are usually too far away to pick a fight. So, when we build the Templates of Fighting, we are essentially talking about four different relationships: when stones are attached, when they are one point apart, when they are a knight’s move apart, and when they are diagonally apart. The subcategories are simple ones of numbers: whether the fight is 1-on-1, 2-on-1, 3-on-1, or 4-on-1. You’ll recognize the importance of this classification if you’ve ever seen a kung fu movie in which the bad guys, one by one, attack the hero and are easily rebuffed. Really, they ought to get together and coordinate their efforts.

The Templates of Fighting

TEMPLATE ONE: ATTACHMENT

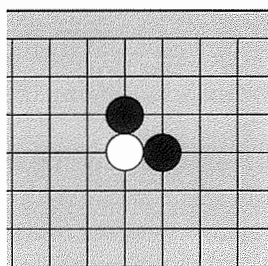
Diagram 1. Here two opposing stones are in contact. This would be a stone with one stone attached right to it, a 1-on-1 fight.



1 on 1

Diagram 1

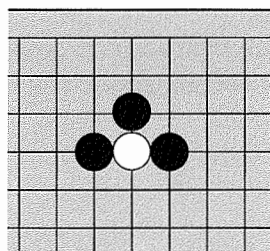
Diagram 2. The next stage is the 2-on-1 fight. If there are two stones against one, starting from *Diagram 1*, the most effective move is to hane or attach right next to the opposing stone again, working from your own current stone.



2 on 1

Diagram 2

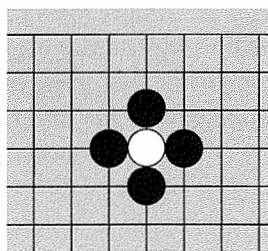
Diagram 3. The next stage would be the 3-on-1 fight. If there are three stones against one, starting from *Diagram 2*, the most effective fighting move is to hane again, attaching right next to the opposing stone, working from either of your previous stones. In this stage, the opposing stone is in atari.



3 on 1

Diagram 3

Diagram 4. The final stage is the 4-on-1 fight. If there are four stones against one, the most effective position for those four stones is to hane again, blocking all the liberties, capturing the opposing stone and removing it from the board.



4 on 1

Diagram 4

TEMPLATE ONE: ATTACHMENT

What does this all mean? Supposing you were playing a game in which for every one move your opponent made, you could make four moves. In that case, the most efficient thing for you to do would be to surround your opponent's stone, capturing it and removing it from the board.

Diagram 5. If you played your fourth move at 4 here, you wouldn't capture, and the opponent's stone would remain on the board. This result is less efficient than *Diagram 4*. Obviously Black is still in a superior position, but that's natural, because Black outnumbers White 4 to 1. Since in Go we're generally not going to be able to outnumber our opponents on the board, we have to maximize how efficiently our stones work. In this diagram, Black hasn't used his four moves in the best possible way.

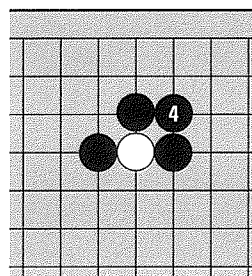


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. Of course we don't get four moves for every one of our opponent's moves, but it stands to reason that this principle of maximum efficiency holds even when, as in a normal game, we alternate moves. For example, you may have heard the expression "a *ponnuki* (or star capture – that is, four stones capturing one as in *Diagram 4*) is worth thirty points." That's because the four stones have achieved their maximum strength potential by capturing an opposing stone.

Now suppose that you used five stones instead of four to capture one stone, as in this diagram. This is not a star capture; we don't value this one nearly as much. Why? Because the marked stone is not very efficient. It's worth something, but you'd much rather have it doing something more valuable, like occupying an empty corner, than backing up stones that don't need any help.

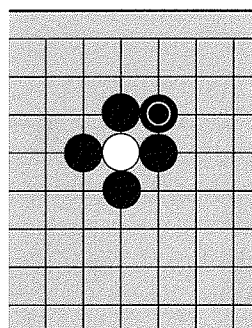


Diagram 6

The Templates of Fighting

TEMPLATE ONE: ATTACHMENT

Diagram 7. Going back, we can see all kinds of implications in this: for example, if you've got stones in this array, it's not a very efficient use of a move to capture White. More likely, you're hoping that the beleaguered white stone will try to make a run for it. Then you can maximize the value of each move you play.

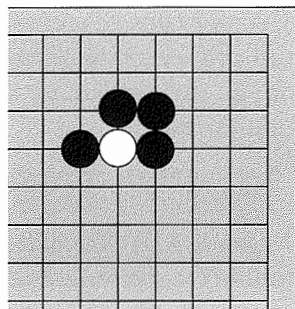


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. Going back further, you can easily guess that playing 3 here is going to be inefficient.

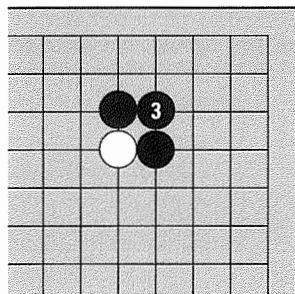


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. Going way back to the beginning, the implication is that Black 1 is not the most efficient move. Of course, that's not to say this move is bad, or that it's always worse than the hane; if there are other stones on the board, there are other factors to take into consideration, which may mean that playing a locally less inefficient move is the best play.

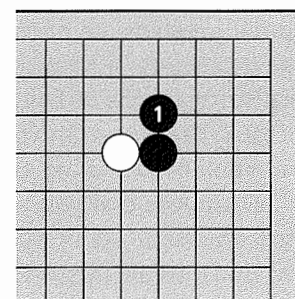


Diagram 9

But what we can take away from this is that when two stones are next to each other, the most efficient way of fighting is going to be the hane – that is the most effective, efficient place for two stones fighting against one to be. In a 1-on-1 fight, whoever plays first is itching to hane.

TEMPLATE ONE: ATTACHMETT

Diagram 10. Here's the 2-on-2 fight. Both sides want to "get in front and cut 'em off." If after Black's marked hane White extends at 1, then if Black follows at 2, we get this shape, called "hitting the head" of two stones.

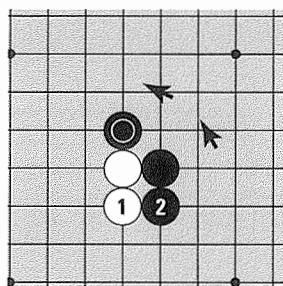


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. To avoid having the head of two of her stones hit – where Black would definitely have gotten in front and cut her off – White cuts.

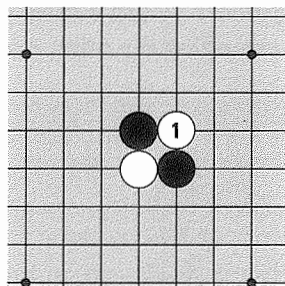
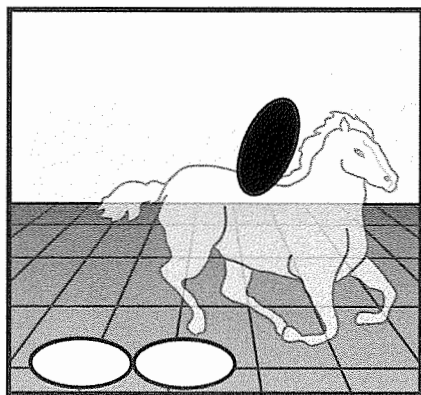


Diagram 11



The Templates of Fighting

TEMPLATE ONE: ATTACHMENT

After the cut, Black extends. Why?

Diagram 12. Imagine that Black plays the atari at 2 instead. After White runs at 3, Black has a cutting point. Suppose Black connects at 4. At this stage, it's the same as if Black had extended at 4, White had extended at 3, and Black had made a slow turn at 2. Black would rather have the option of extending the other stone at A.

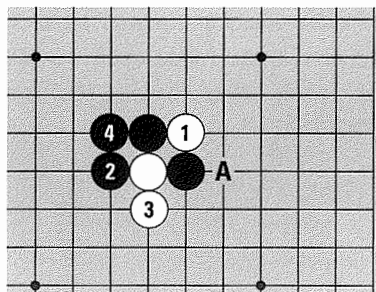


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. Which way to extend? If White extends at 2 here, along the side of the Black stones, Black can hit the head of two stones again at 3.

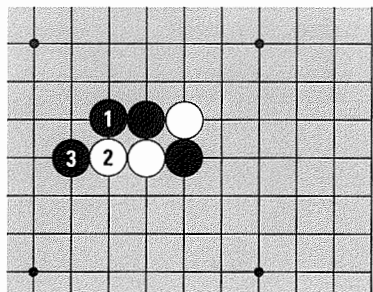


Diagram 13

Diagram 14. Neither side would like the head of two stones to get hit, so extending in a way that avoids that in the end creates a shape I call the "Pinwheel".

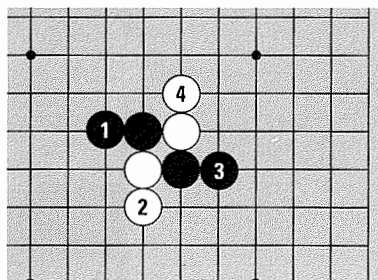


Diagram 14

TEMPLATE TWO: ONE POINT APART

Diagram 15. Now imagine another fight where the opposing stones are separated by one point:

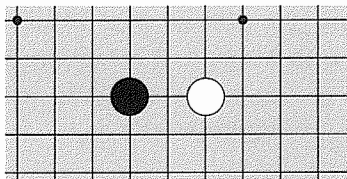


Diagram 15

Diagram 16. Still trying to get in front and cut 'em off, if it's 2-on-1, Black tries attacking with the knight's move.

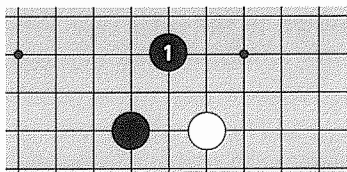


Diagram 16

Diagram 17. In a 3-on-1 battle, Black plays another knight's move:

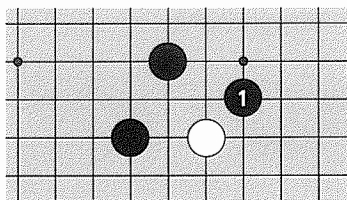


Diagram 17

Diagram 18. Just as in our 2-on-2 combat when the stones are making contact, in a 2-on-2 fight when stones are one point apart, once again White tries to cut. In this case the best way to do this is to "jump cut" the knight's move.

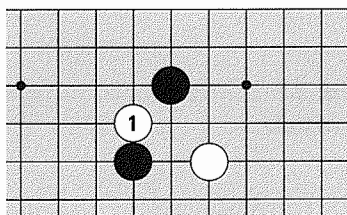


Diagram 18

Diagram 19. After both sides cut, notice the shape reverts. Once again, we are back at the Pinwheel.

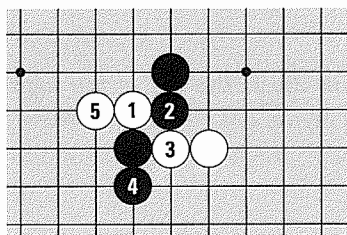


Diagram 19

The Templates of Fighting

TEMPLATE TWO: ONE POINT APART

Diagram 20. Notice that Black has a choice with his second extension: he can play at A. He can also tightly wrap up White's cutting stone with 4.

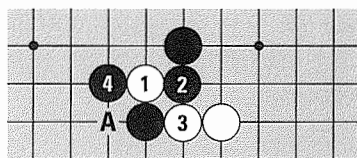


Diagram 20

Diagram 21. In the latter case, White will most often consider using that stone as a sacrifice. White's lost some pebbles, but she's kept her horse's nose out in front. If it turns out that this (or the extension at A in the previous diagram) is too good for Black, that generally means White's cut was too aggressive.

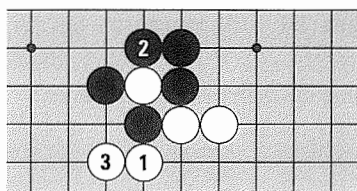


Diagram 21

Diagram 22. In the 2-on-1 battle, Black can also attach.

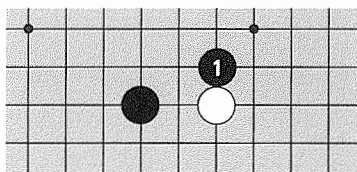


Diagram 22

Diagram 23. If White cuts, we again get the Pinwheel.

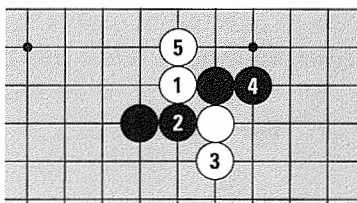


Diagram 23

Diagram 24. If the cut is too aggressive, instead of the cut, White can hane on the outside.

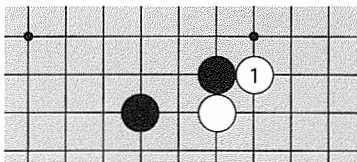


Diagram 24

TEMPLATE TWO: ONE POINT APART

Diagram 25. If Black pulls back, White can then extend at 3.

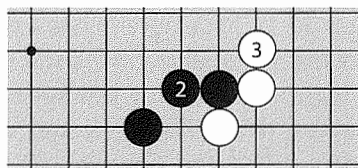


Diagram 25

Diagram 26. If Black extends at 2 here, White can push in at 3, and Black pulls back at 4.

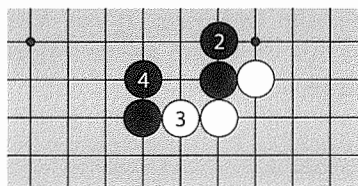


Diagram 26

TEMPLATE THREE: A KNIGHT'S MOVE APART

Diagram 27. Here's a fight where the opposing stones are a knight's move apart.

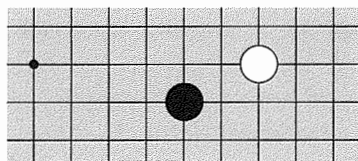


Diagram 27

Diagram 28. Still trying to get in front and cut 'em off, if it's 2-on-1, Black can cap at 1. Spin this around 90 degrees and you can see that it reverts to the 2-on-1 battle in *Diagram 16*.

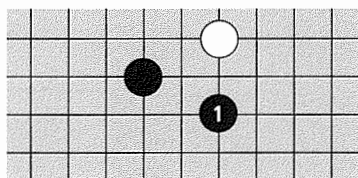


Diagram 28

Diagram 29. If the cut is too aggressive, White can attach on the outside at 1 here. Black can hane, White pulls back, and Black connects at 4 or A.

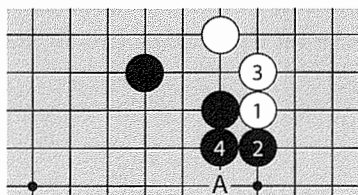


Diagram 29

The Templates of Fighting

TEMPLATE THREE: A KNIGHT'S MOVE APART

Diagram 30. If Black doesn't like a cut, he can play the diagonal at 1. He's still trying to get in front, but with less speed and more connectivity. This slow and strong move was called the Shusaku diagonal, after the Go great who often played this way in the opening. I call this shape the Mouse – the two black stones form the ears, in this case with an un-Mickey-ish white nose.

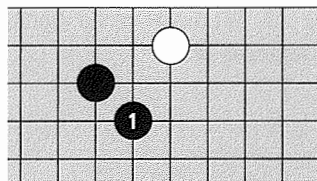


Diagram 30

TEMPLATE FOUR: A DIAGONAL APART

Diagram 31. A diagonal approach is bit awkward locally, because the follow-up 2-on-1 and 3-on-1 conflicts look like inefficient attachment fights. However, it can be useful in some cases – for example, as a shoulder hit that reduces your opponent's area.

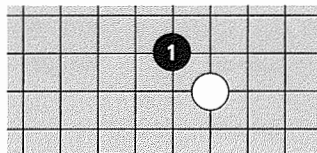


Diagram 31

Diagram 32. In this 2-on-2 battle, Black is careful to stay in front. If Black plays at A, White can hit the head of two stones.

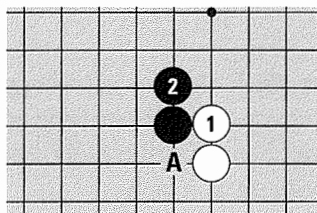


Diagram 32

TEMPLATE FOUR: A DIAGONAL APART

Diagram 33. As long as White wants to push from behind, Black should let her, and keep himself out in front.

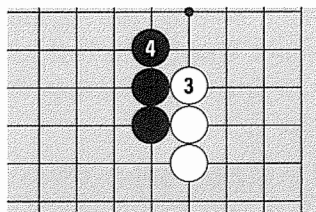


Diagram 33

Diagram 34 If White cuts him off on the other side at 1 or A here, Black cuts her off at 2.

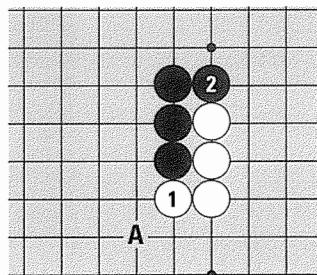


Diagram 34

Diagram 35. If White tries a little speed to get ahead with the knight's move at 1, Black can still stay in front with the jump at 2.

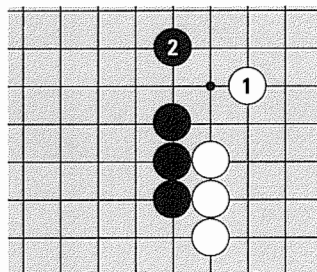


Diagram 35

With this background, let's look now at the Guidelines of Shape.

Guidelines of Shape

1. ATTACH, HANE

When you attach, you are trying to start a direct fight by making sudden contact with enemy stones. Usually the best response to an attachment is to resist strongly by playing the hane, trying to get the upperhand by wheeling around the attaching stone as quickly as possible.

Diagram 1. White attaches at 1. How should Black respond?

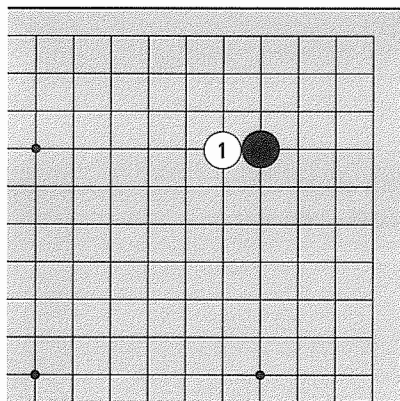


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. A hane with Black 2 is correct (a hane on the other side is also possible). If White extends at 3, Black gets a superior position by connecting at 4, or playing at A or B.

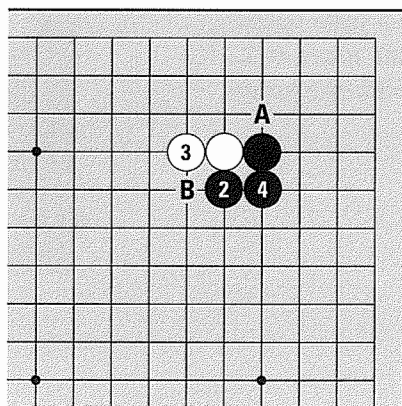


Diagram 2

1. ATTACH, HANE

Diagram 3. Responding to White 1 by extending at 2 isn't so powerful as a hane. In some cases extending is a good idea, but generally it's the weaker play.

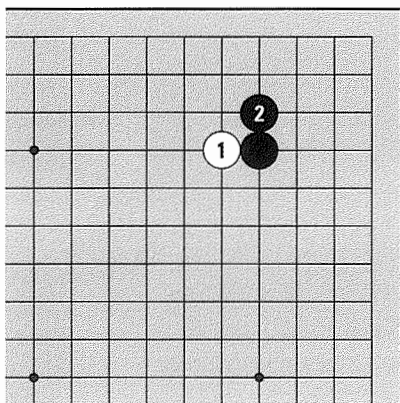


Diagram 3

“Attach, hane” is the smallest tactical example of our strategic mantra: Get in front and cut ‘em off.

Of course, you’ll often see people playing something other than the hane in response to an attachment. There are two possible reasons for this:

- 1) They are playing in a slack, inefficient way;
- 2) They have first considered the hane and after careful deliberation have discarded it in favor of something else.

For instance, if you’re playing a handicap game as Black and so already have a big advantage, and you want to avoid complications and tough fighting, you may not want to hane in response to an attachment. You might stretch or extend instead. Remember, though, that avoiding fights because you think your opponent is better than you – and not because of the board position – is not the way to become good enough to win without a handicap.

Guidelines of Shape

1. ATTACH, HANE

Diagram 4. White attaches at the 3-4 point to Black's star point stone. How should Black answer?

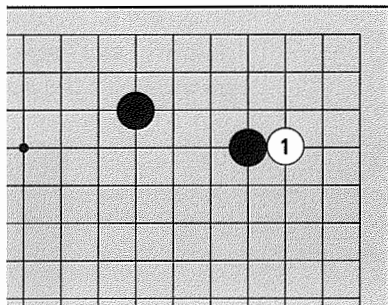


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. The hane at 1, with White making a base in the moves to 4 and Black solidifying the corner, is a standard sequence. (Black could have also played the outside hane at White 2.)

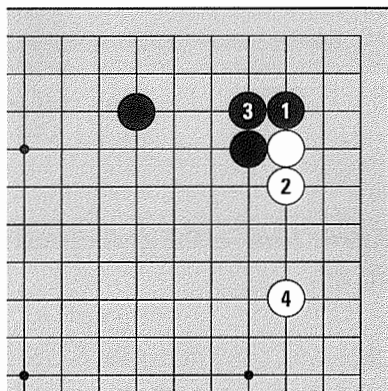


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. Just extending at 2 is slack. White takes the corner with 3.

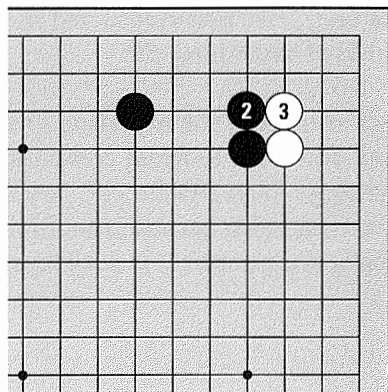
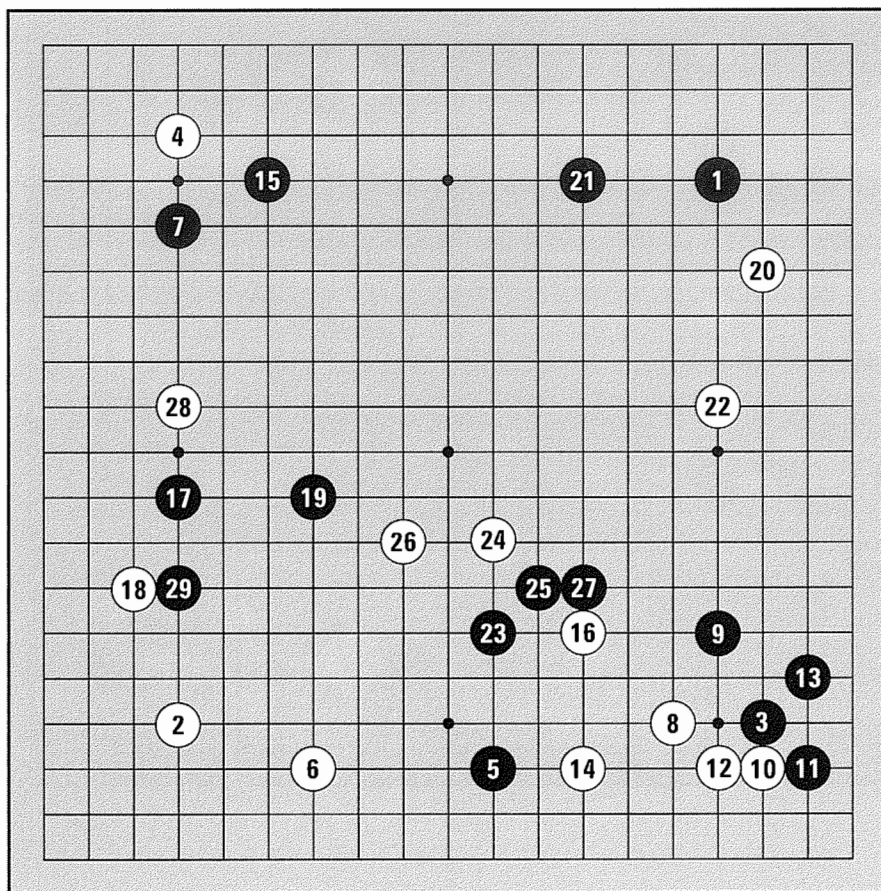


Diagram 6

1. ATTACH, HANE

Figure 1. This is the first match of the Wangwi title best-of-seven series between Cho Hoon-hyun 9 dan (White), and Yu Chang-hyuk 6 dan, played on May 2nd, 1995. How would you respond to Yu's attachment at 29?

Figure 1 (1-29)



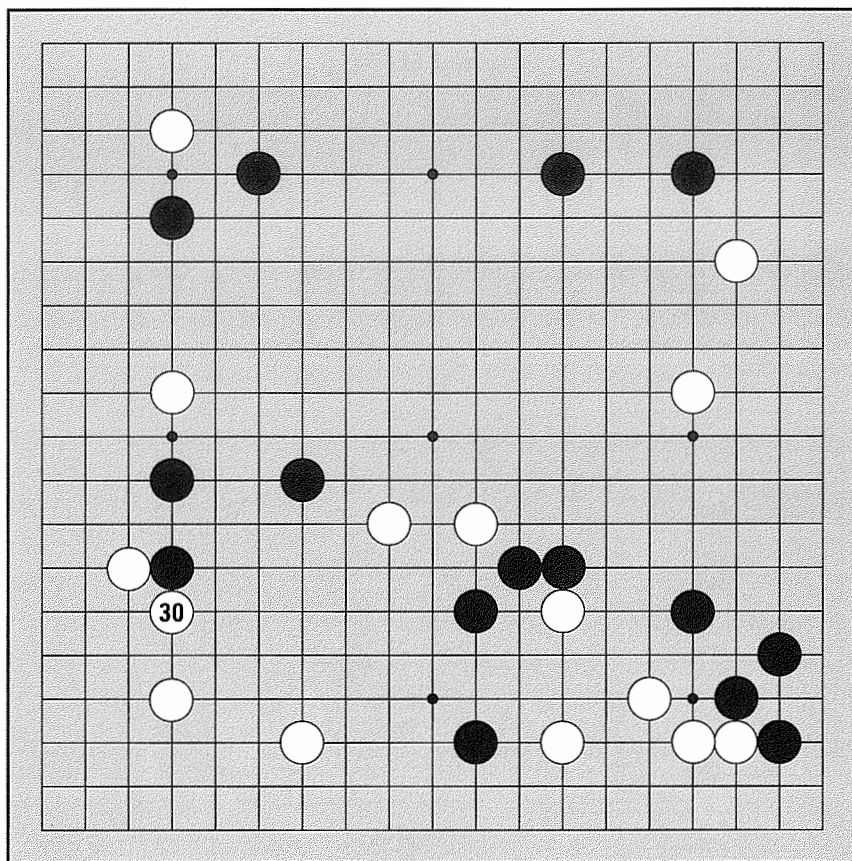
Game continues on page 18

Guidelines of Shape

1. ATTACH, HANE

Figure 2. White plays the hane at 30.

Figure 2 (30)



Game continues on page 21

2. THE TIGER'S MOUTH

I had a student once who couldn't observe a game without blurting out "Spoil his tiger's mouth!" at every opportunity. Luckily his Australian accent tended to make this more amusing than annoying – and at any rate, even though he wasn't then a strong player, his advice was generally right on the mark.

Diagram 1. In this shape, there is a key point for both sides.

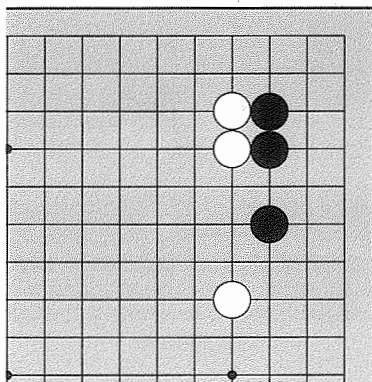


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If it's Black's turn, he can play the tiger's mouth at 1. White has allowed Black to strike at the key point.

Diagram 3. Following the proverb "my opponent's key point is also my key point," White wants to spoil the tiger's mouth at 1. When Black connects at 2, White plasters him down by blocking at 3. There's a huge difference between this result and Diagram 2.

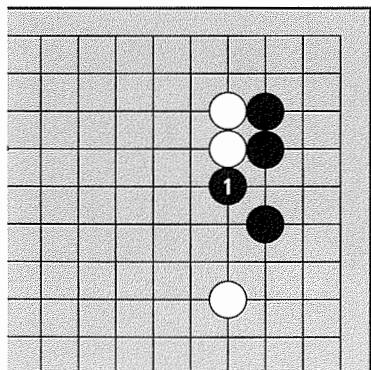


Diagram 2

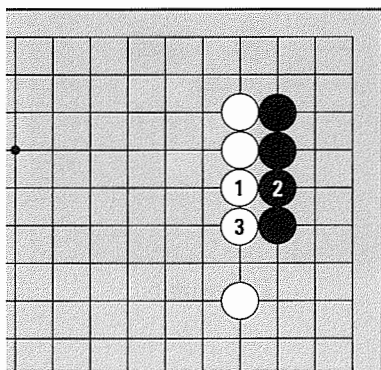


Diagram 3

Guidelines of Shape

2. THE TIGER'S MOUTH

Diagram 4. If spoiling the tiger's mouth is good, making one should be good too. How should Black play here?

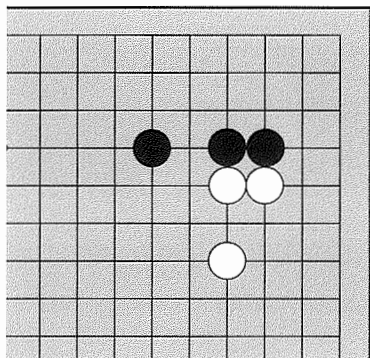


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Black makes the tiger's mouth at 1. Next where should White play?

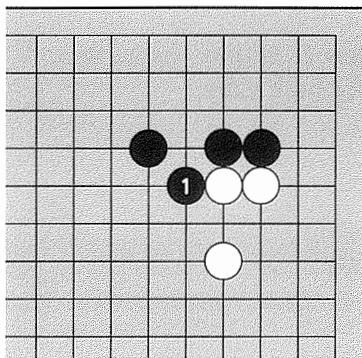


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. White can also play a tiger's mouth. If she doesn't play here, Black can extend at 2 and White's stones are in a sorry state. After White 2—

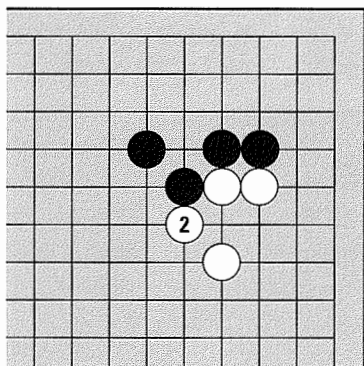


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. If Black makes the tiger's mouth at 3, White plays another tiger's mouth at 4. (Next Black will want to extend at 5 to prevent White from wheeling around with an atari.)

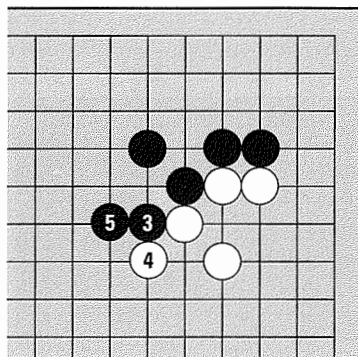
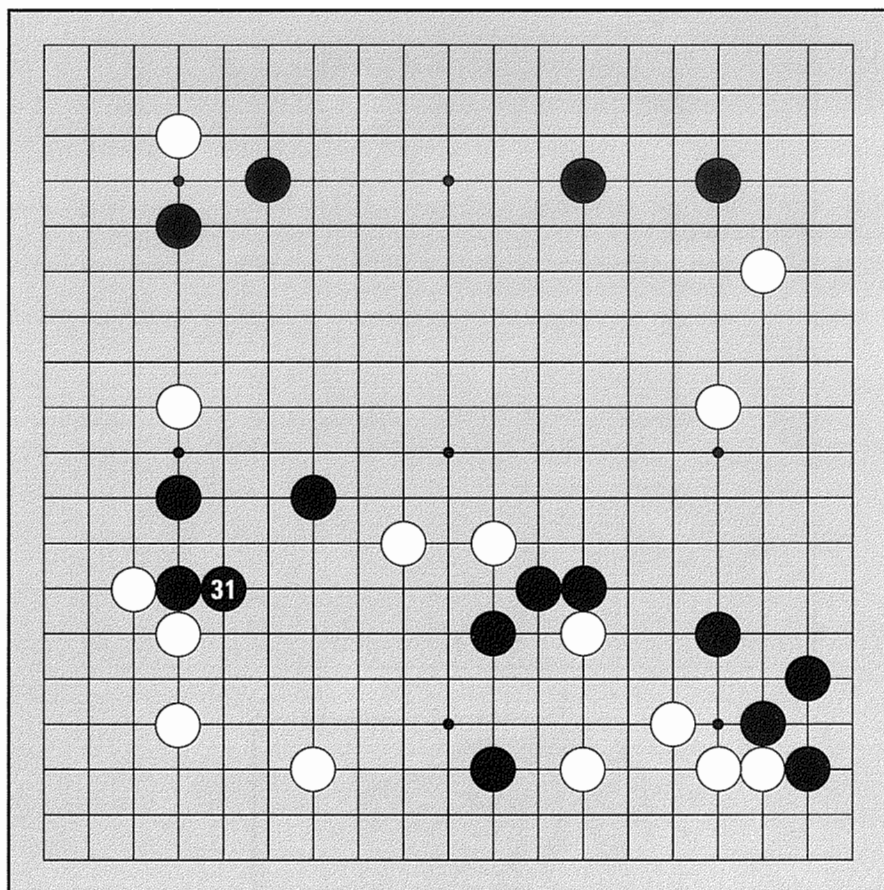


Diagram 7

2. THE TIGER'S MOUTH

Figure 3. In the Wangwi game, Black extended at 31. Where does Cho play now?

Figure 3 (31)



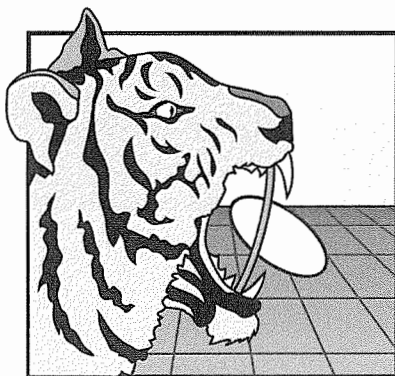
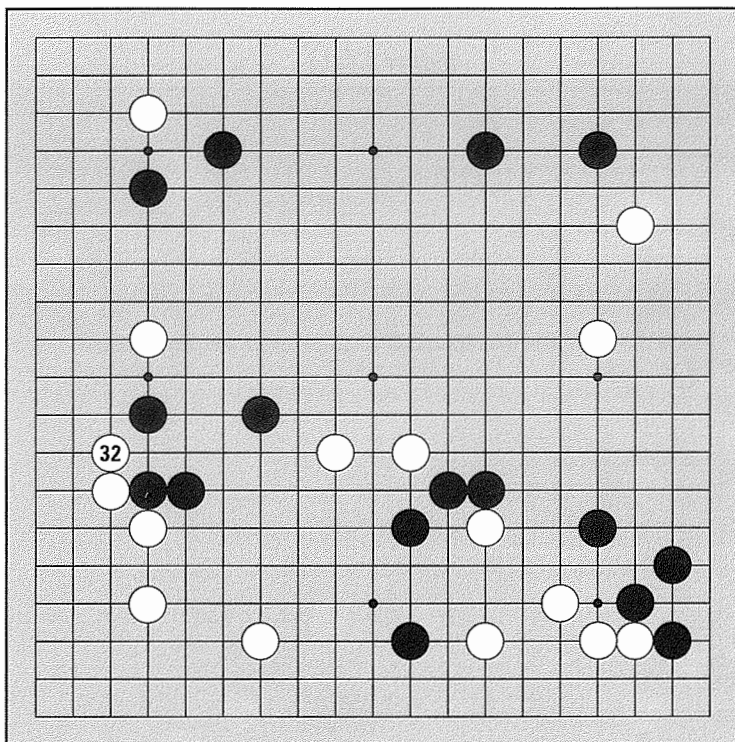
Game continues on page 22

Guidelines of Shape

2. THE TIGER'S MOUTH

Figure 4. White spoiled a tiger's mouth with 32.

Figure 4 (32)



Game continues on page 25

3. THE ONE-POINT JUMP

Most of the time, a one-point jump is a good move – and if it's a one-point jump toward the center, there's a saying that it's never bad. This is not really an exaggeration.

Diagram 1. You may remember from previous volumes that the one-point jump in this situation is a very good move, enlarging Black's area on both sides. A one-point jump to the center, especially when you're starting from the third line, is good not just for area enlargement but in other contexts as well.

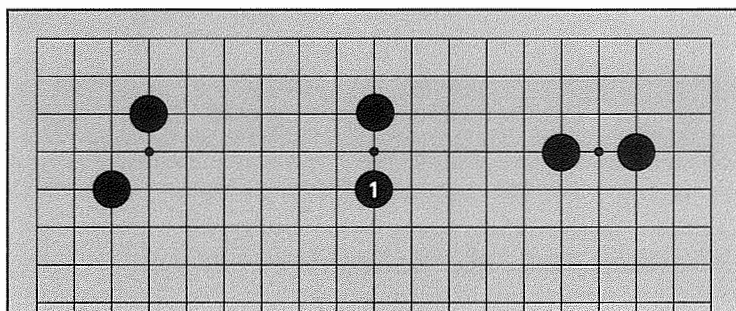


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. The one-point jump is good here too. It prevents an invasion at A while developing towards the center. ("Developing" or "moving out" towards the center has many benefits, including making it easier for you to invade later.) Black can do the same at 2, enlarging the northwest area while guarding against an invasion at B.

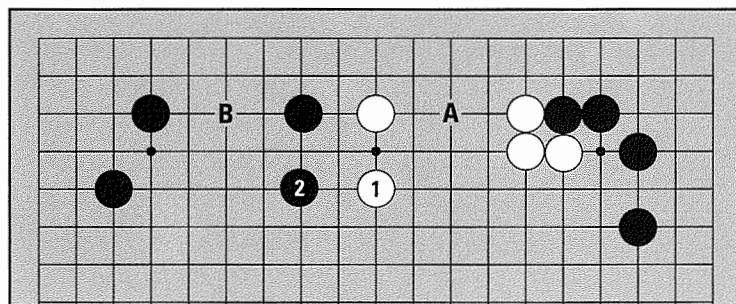


Diagram 2

Guidelines of Shape

3. THE ONE-POINT JUMP

The one-point jump is also extremely useful when trying to escape.

Diagram 3. White invades Black's area at 1. Black attacks at 2. After this, White's one-point jump towards the center is the logical thing.

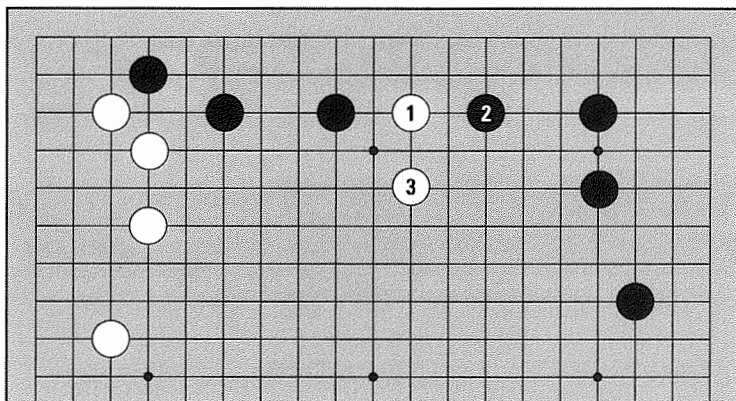


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. If Black continues at 4 and 6, White keeps jumping out towards the center with 5 and 7. There's a proverb that says "run with the one-point jump" – because escaping this way is both fast and safe.

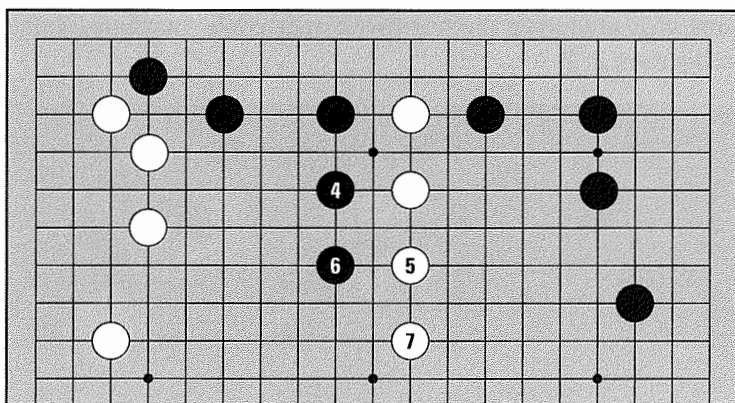
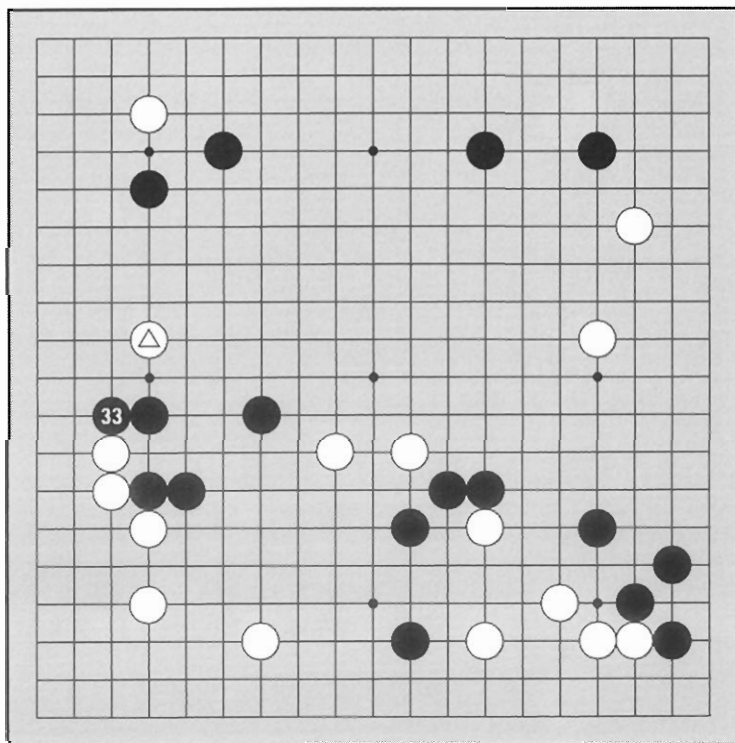


Diagram 4

3. THE ONE-POINT JUMP

Figure 5. Black has just blocked at 33. White would like to help out his marked stone. Where is a good place for White to play?

Figure 5 (33)



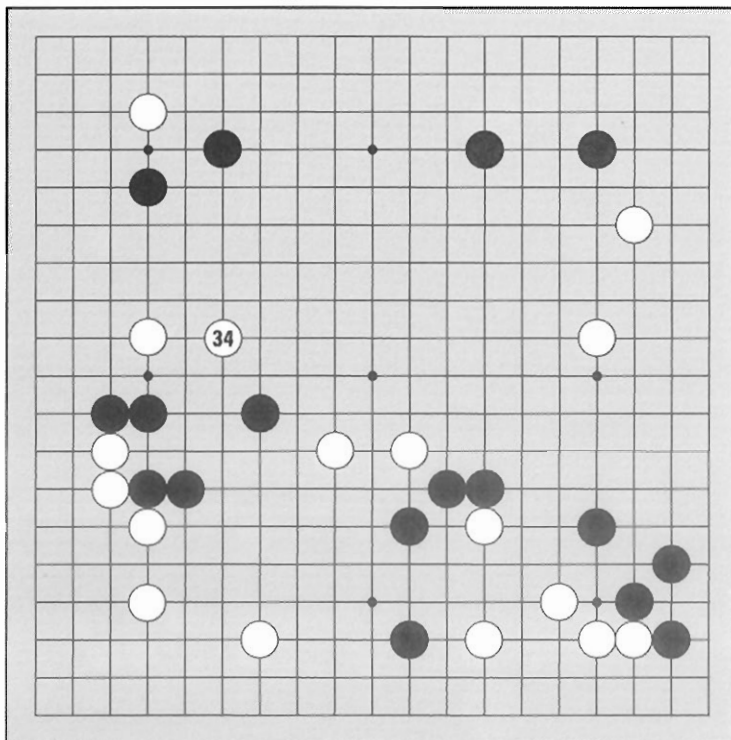
Game continues on page 26

Guidelines of Shape

3. THE ONE-POINT JUMP

Figure 6. White plays the one-point jump at 34. His one lone stone has escaped towards the center.

Figure 6 (34)



Game continues on page 31

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

The knight's move is faster than the diagonal move, but it has a weakness: it can be cut. Now, if you never bothered to cut the enemy's knight's moves – or at least to exploit the threat of doing so – your opponent would use them all the time. So at some point you'll want to cut the knight's move. However, there's a good way and a bad way to do this.

Diagram 1. If you have no stones in the area, starting a fight by cutting a knight's move is usually a bad idea – you'll be outnumbered 3-2 after the cut.

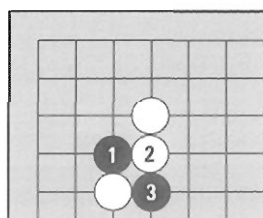


Diagram 1

Diagram 3. From the marked stone, Black can jump across White's knight move at 1 and then cut with 3.

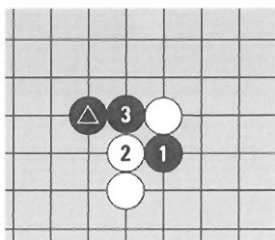


Diagram 3

Diagram 2. So, when we talk about cutting the knight's move, we usually assume that we have a stone in the area that can help us. Specifically, the shape that comes up most often in fighting is when there is a knight's move response to a one-point approach. Here Black's stone at 1 is "looking at" a potential cut of White's knight's move.

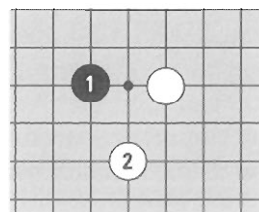


Diagram 2

Diagram 4. The wrong way to cut the knight's move from the marked stone would be to try to push in at 1. Black ends up with bad shape.

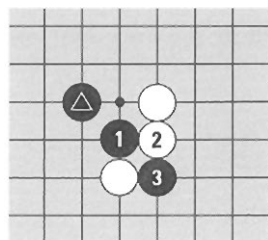


Diagram 4

Guidelines of Shape

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

One way to understand how to cut the knight's move is to look at the resulting shape and compare it to the appropriate template of fighting.

Diagram 5. Here the resulting cut will lead to a pinwheel with White A and Black B.

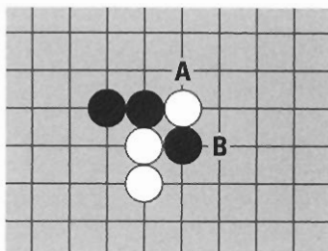


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. Here no pinwheel will form: White is occupying Black's vital pivot point with the marked stone, and can play another move at the pivot point at A. (You may remember the pivot point from Volume 4 – it's the vital point that would form a tiger's mouth from a diagonal.)

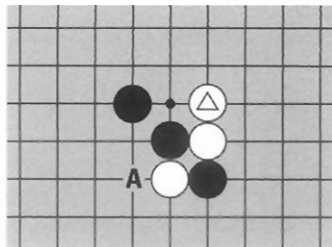


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. If Black's marked stone is here in relation to White's knight's move – rather than at A as in the previous example – then in order to cut in a way that leads to a pinwheel, Black has to push in at 1 and then cut at 3.

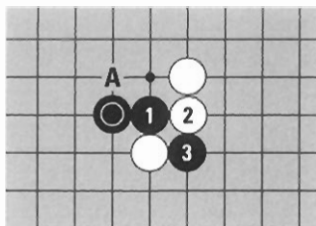


Diagram 7

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

Diagram 8. The marked White seems to connect underneath with a knight's move, but there's a problem with this shape. How can Black sever White's group in two?

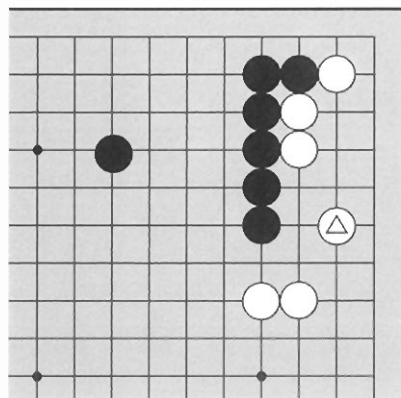


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. Pushing in at 1 goes nowhere. White can just block at 2. Don't push into a knight's move if you aren't going to cut – it just makes your opponent stronger.

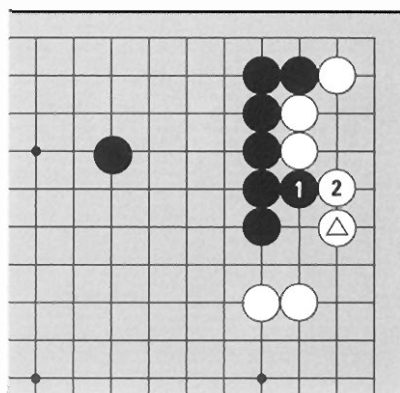


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. Since Black has the marked stone looking at the cut, jump-cutting the knight's move at Black 1 is the move to consider.

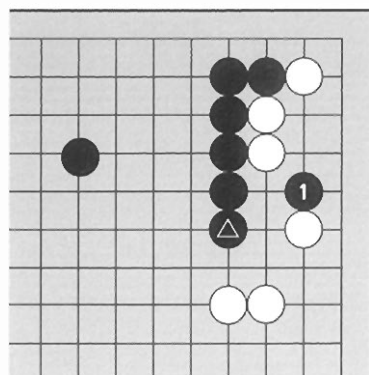


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. When White plays 2, Black cuts at 3. White has to catch the jump-cutting stone at 4, since if she plays at 5, Black can catch three stones at A. Black can then atari at 5 and connect at 7. White is now cut in two.

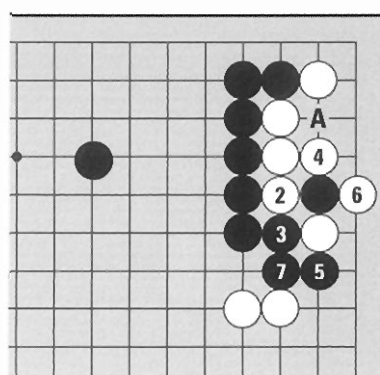


Diagram 11

Guidelines of Shape

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

Diagram 12. Black would like to seal off the center, but it looks like White has escaped. What can Black do?

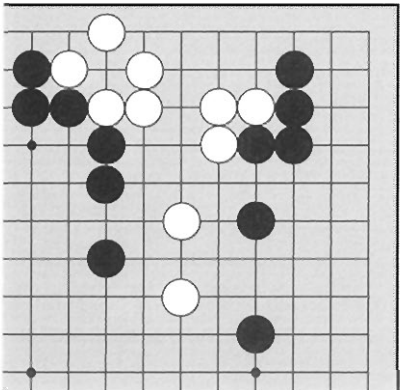


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. Black's marked stone is looking at the knight's move he wants to cut. Jump-cutting is quite effective here.

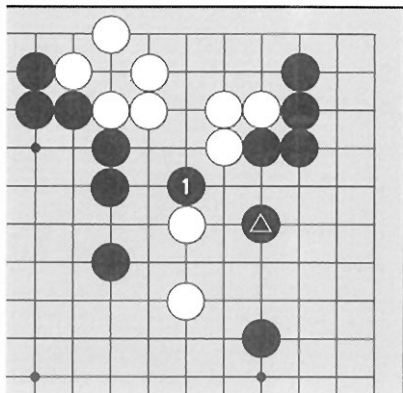


Diagram 13

Diagram 14. The sequence to 7 is about the best White can do. Black snips off one stone, making thickness and sealing in White's group.

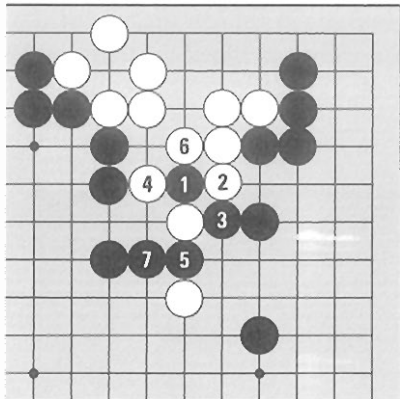
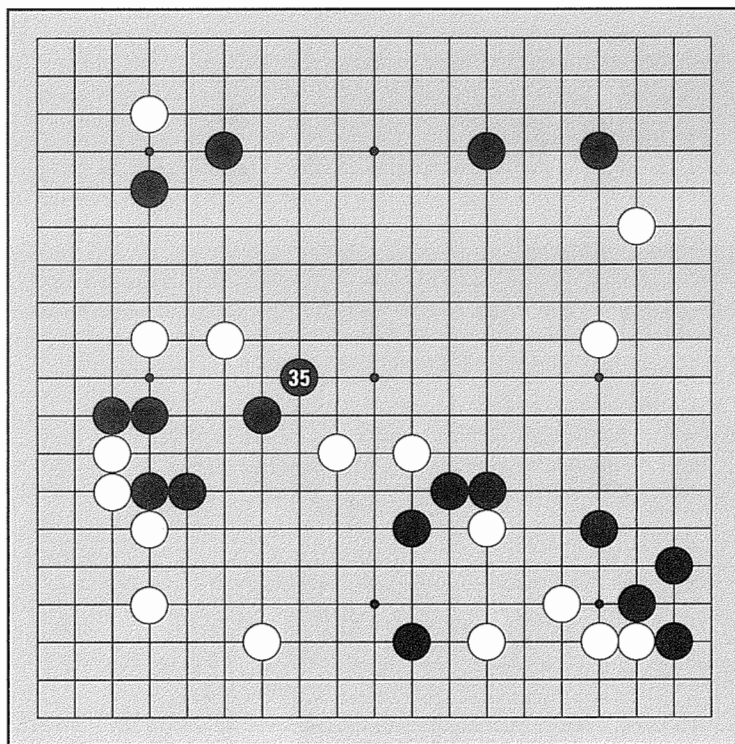


Diagram 14

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

Figure 7. What do you suppose White (Cho) did in this position?

Figure 7 (35)



By the way, did you notice Black's move at 35 was a "double" mouse shape? The mouse shape is very strong and steady – it lets Black move out while keeping White's stones separated.

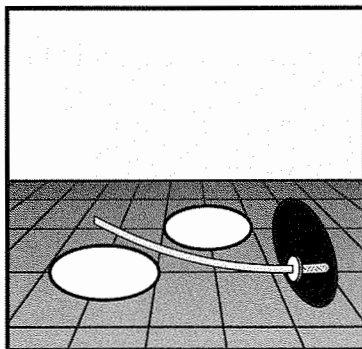
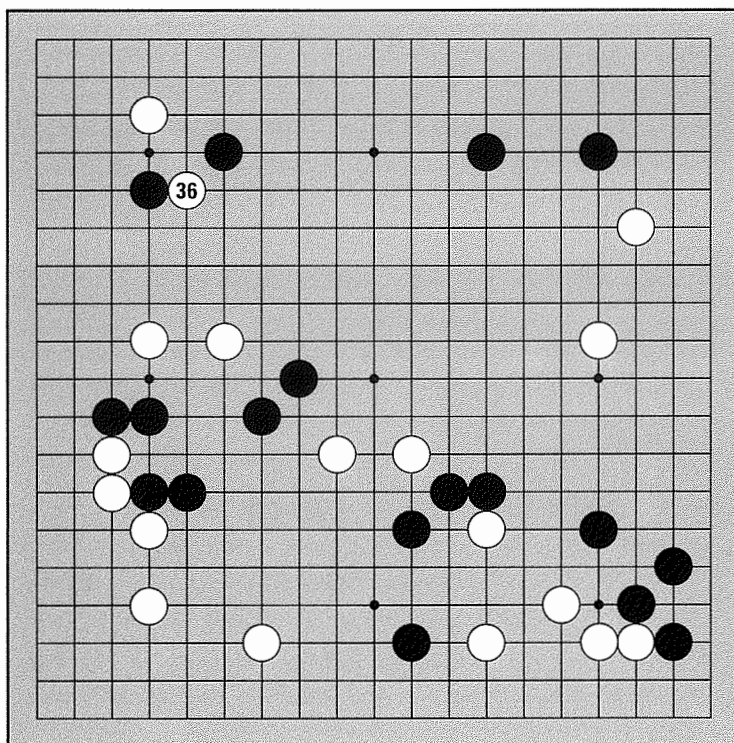
Game continues on page 32

Guidelines of Shape

4. JUMP-CUT THE KNIGHT'S MOVE

Figure 8. White jump-cuts the knight's move at 36.

Figure 8 (36)



Game continues on page 37

5. CUT, EXTEND

A bad response to a cut is a fast road to tragedy, a long walk down a short pier, a — well, you get the picture. If you do get cut, calmly extending is a good idea.

Diagram 1. How should Black respond to White's crosscut at 1?

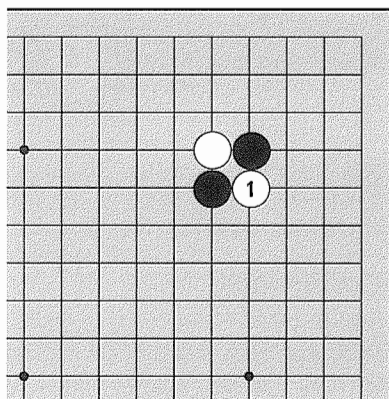


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. After playing atari at 1 and 3, Black doesn't have a good next move.

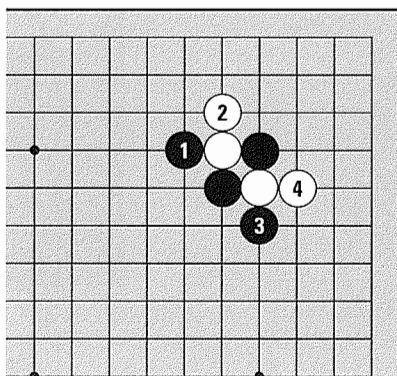


Diagram 2

Guidelines of Shape

5. CUT, EXTEND

Diagram 3. Extending on one side is good shape. Next, A and B are *miai* – that is, they reflect, or in other words if White plays one, Black plays the other. Black is in much better shape here than in *Diagram 2*.

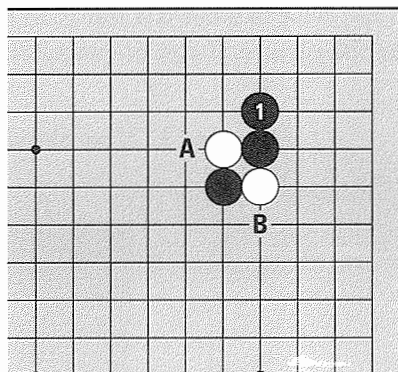


Diagram 3

Okay, so we extend – but in which direction?

Here's an example of how you might use the templates of fighting: try to get to the pinwheel formation. With a simple crosscut, any way you extend at first can lead to a pinwheel, but for subsequent moves, or when there are other stones involved, thinking of the pinwheel will give a hint as to the best extension.

Diagram 4. This is a standard sequence that arises from Black's pincer of White's knight's approach to the star-point stone. Black pushes up at 1 and severs at 3. What should White do?

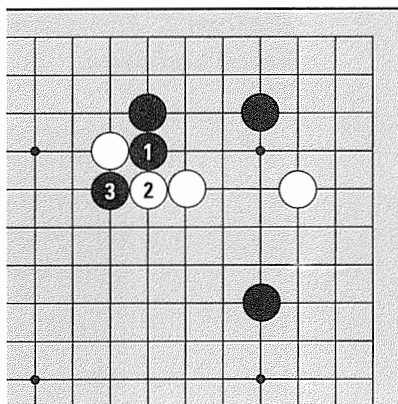


Diagram 4

5. CUT, EXTEND

Diagram 5. Atari here dooms the marked White stone.

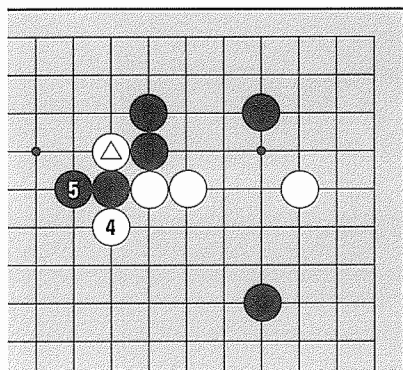


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. If anything, this atari is worse. Black's stone is strengthened, and White has to worry about the cut at A and being enclosed at B.

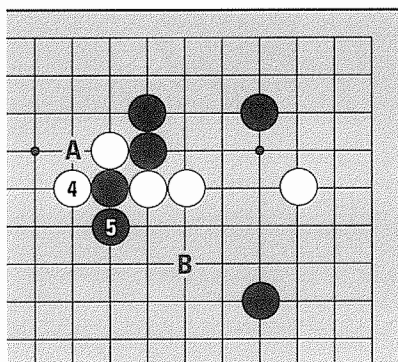


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. Extending is the right move. A pinwheel forms.

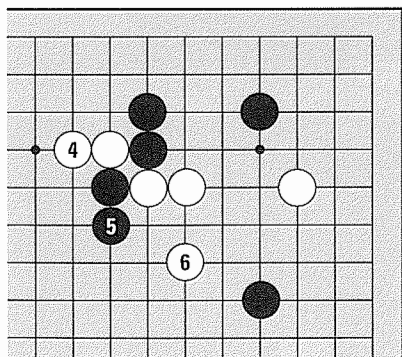


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. White can also extend at 4 here. Although it allows Black to hit the head of two stones at 5, in the sequence to 8 White manages both sides.

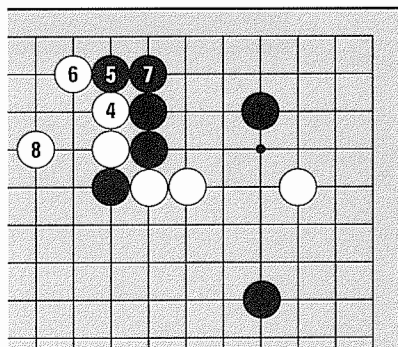


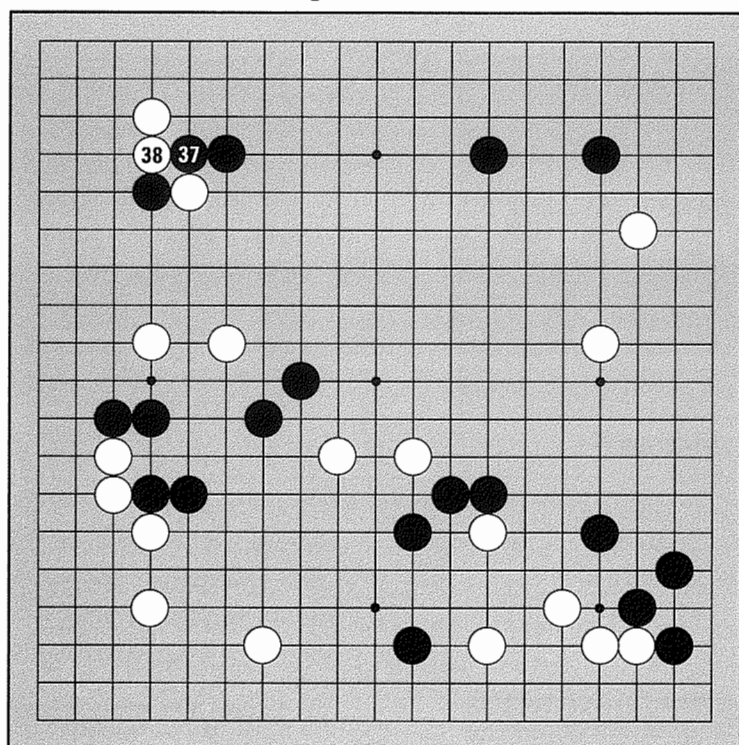
Diagram 8

Guidelines of Shape

5. CUT, EXTEND

Figure 9. After the cut, what do you think Black does?

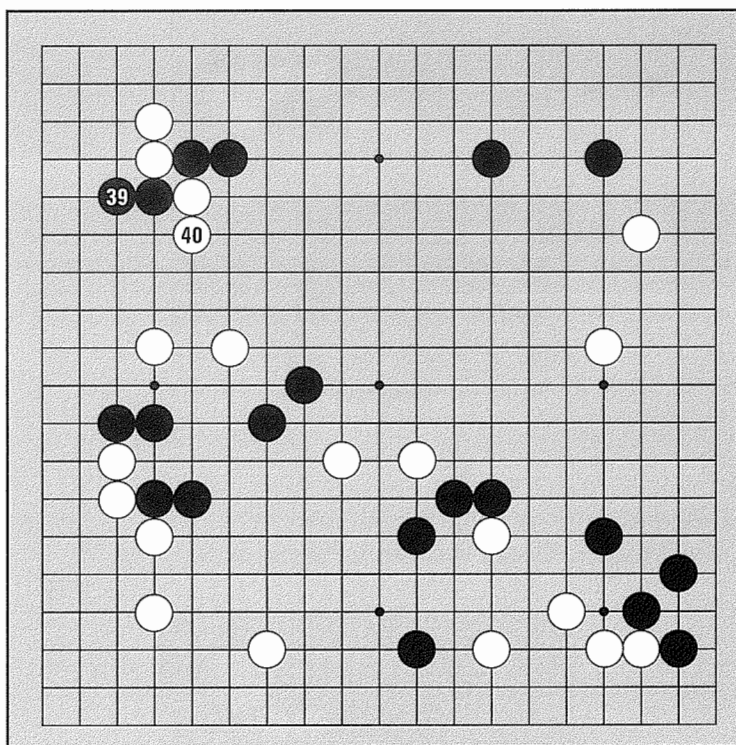
Figure 9 (37-38)



5. CUT, EXTEND

Figure 10. Black extends at 39. Next White extends at 40, forming the pinwheel.

Figure 10 (39-40)



Game continues on page 41

Guidelines of Shape

6. PREVENT THE BAMBOO JOINT

Diagram 1. White's two stones are cut off in Black's area. But if White can find Black's weakness, she can capture the cutting stones. Where is the key point?

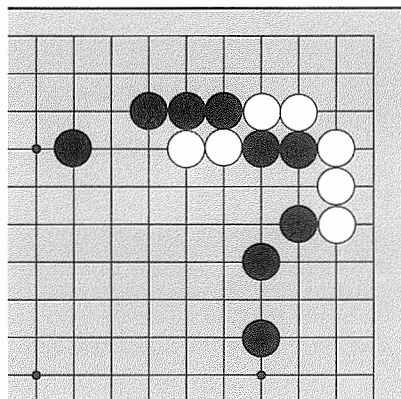


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. Preventing the bamboo joint is the key point. After White 1, Black's two cutting stones are trapped.

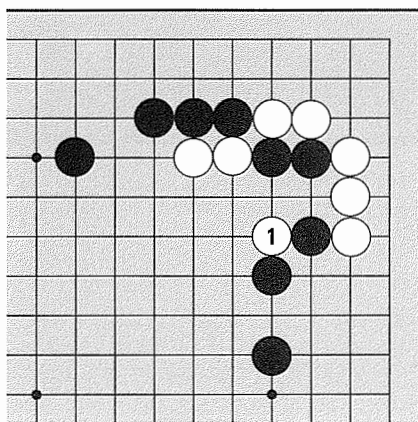


Diagram 2

6. PREVENT THE BAMBOO JOINT

Diagram 3. If Black plays atari at 2, White just comes out at 3. Try to confirm for yourself that Black can't escape once White prevents the bamboo joint.

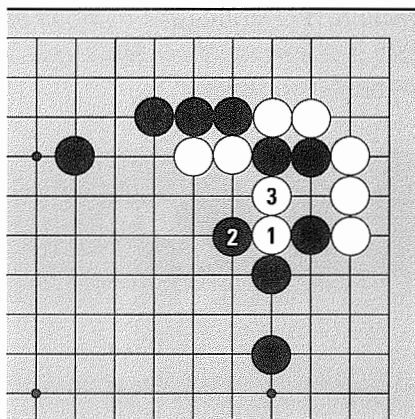


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. White has just played at 1 to try to save two stones. Where is the key point?

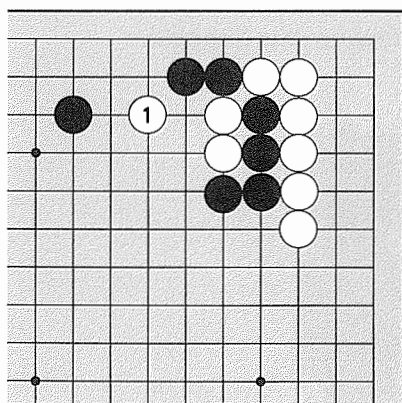


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Connecting underneath at Black 1 is a failure. White secures her stones with a bamboo joint. Black is cut in two.

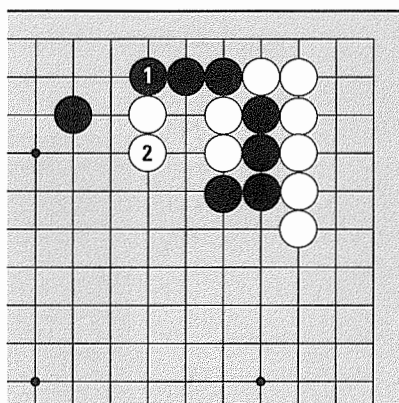


Diagram 5

Guidelines of Shape

6. PREVENT THE BAMBOO JOINT

Diagram 6. Preventing the bamboo joint at Black 1 is correct. Now Black can capture White's two stones.

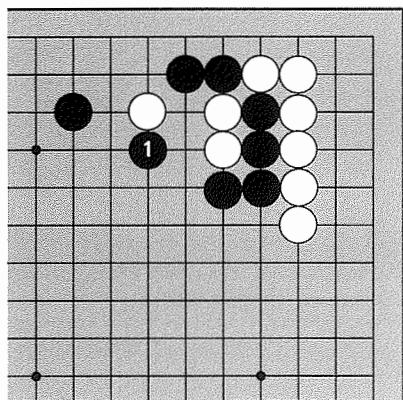


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. If White connects at 2, Black catches these stones with the sequence to 7.

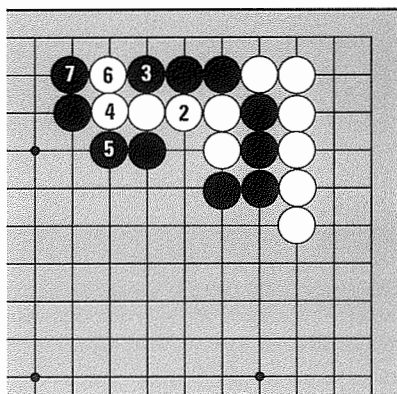


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. You may remember this shape from previous volumes, where I called it the "Alien Symbol." Preventing the bamboo joint at A is effective when you've hit the head of the two stones that form one side of the joint, as the two marked stones do here. This is just one of the reasons why hitting the head of two stones is a good idea.

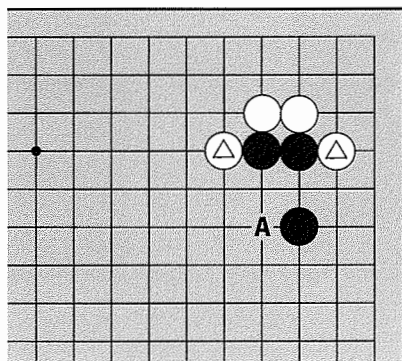
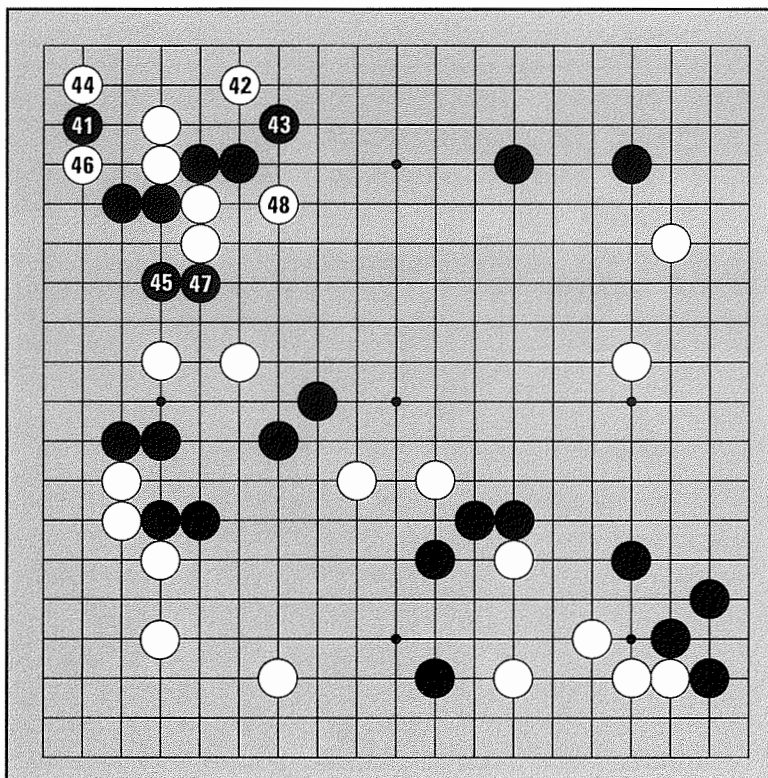


Diagram 8

6. PREVENT THE BAMBOO JOINT

Figure 11. Where is a key point for Black?

Figure 11 (41-48)



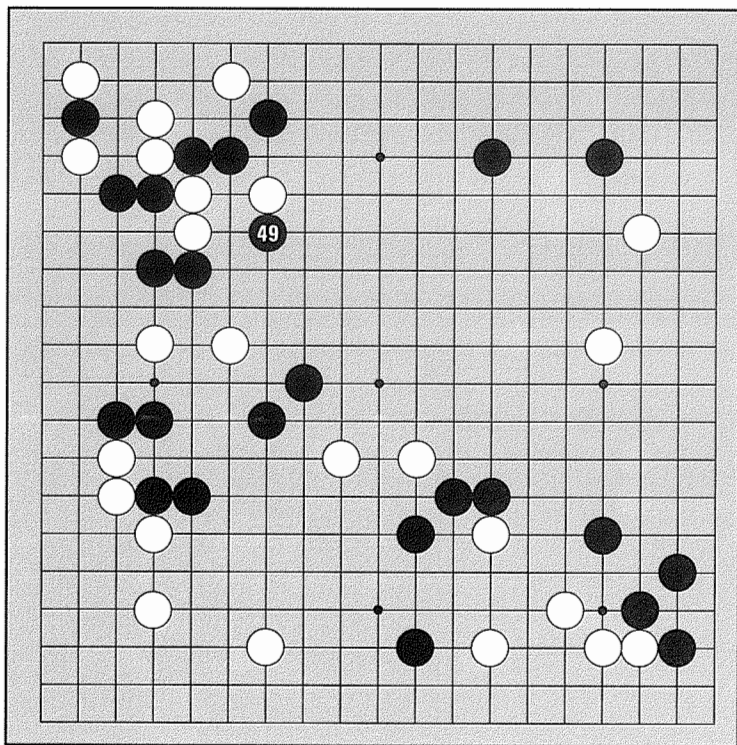
Game continues on page 42

Guidelines of Shape

6. PREVENT THE BAMBOO JOINT

Figure 12. Preventing the bamboo joint at Black 49 is the key point.

Figure 12 (49)



Game continues on page 47

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Once you've made bad shape, it's hard to pick up enough territory or influence to justify all the moves you've played. And the sheer inefficiency of bad shape makes winning difficult. The most common bit of bad shape is the empty triangle.

Diagram 1. In the northwest corner, Black has six stones clumped together. In the northeast, there are six white stones spread out with a good balance of the third and fourth lines. White has a lot more potential territory. Each side has played the same number of stones, but Black's aren't doing as much as they should be, clumped together in a grape-like cluster like this.

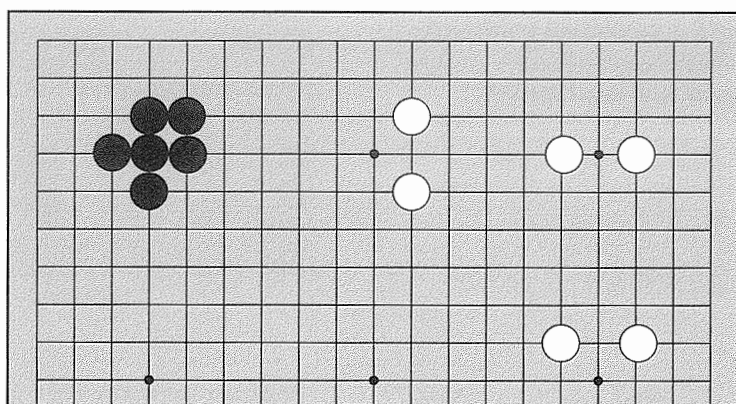


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. The shape on the west is the empty triangle. It's called "empty" because the point at A is not occupied. This shape is similar to the diagonal in the center, but with an extra move at B which has no value — since if White tried to cut at 1 as on the east, Black can connect at 2 anyway. Black has wasted a move.

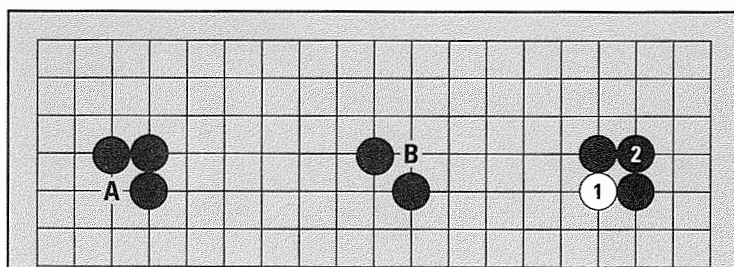


Diagram 2

Guidelines of Shape

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Diagram 3. Leaving the two black stones to fend for themselves is dangerous. Where should Black play to help them out?

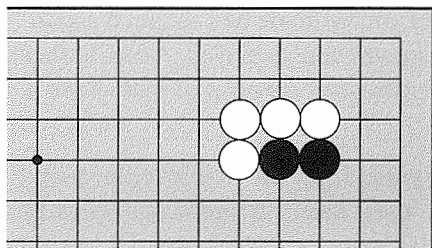


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. Black 1 creates an empty triangle. This is a bad shape – Black's stones don't have the potential they should.

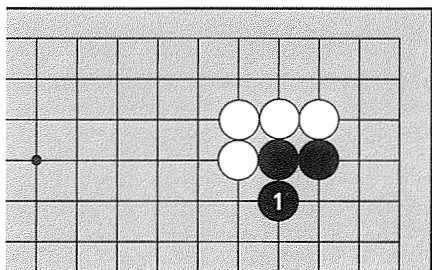


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. A one-point jump at 1 is better. It is more flexible and has more potential than the empty triangle.

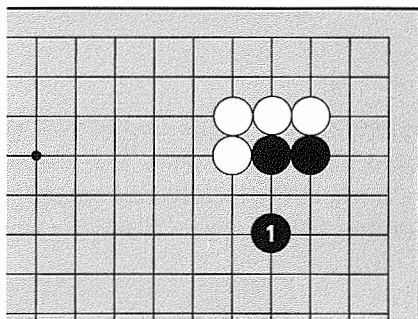


Diagram 5

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Let's go back to our previous jump-cutting example. At several steps along the way, either side could easily get into trouble by playing the empty triangle, simply because they're not making efficient use of the stones that are already there. The reading is a bit complicated, but you can often navigate a confusing situation just by avoiding bad shape.

Diagram 6. As we saw, Black can sever White in this position, but if Black pushes in at 1 with an empty triangle, White can simply block at 2.

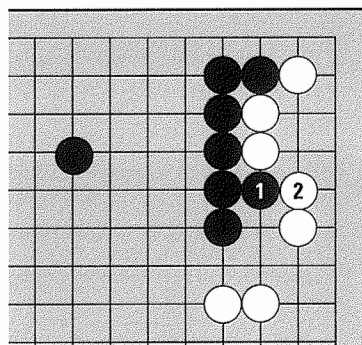


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. Jump-cutting at A is the correct play. However, if Black jump-cuts the knight's move on the other side at 1 and White responds with an empty triangle at 2, Black has an opportunity to redeem his mistake.

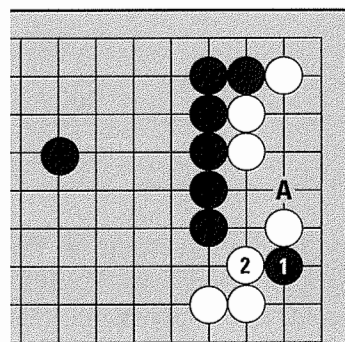


Diagram 7

Guidelines of Shape

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Diagram 8. If Black makes an empty triangle at 1, White can just pull back at 2 and stay all connected.

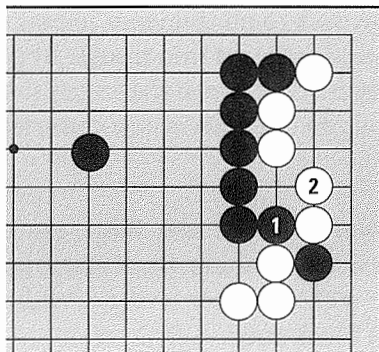


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. But if Black jump cuts on the other side, White will be cut in two - if White 2, Black neatly catches one stone at 3.

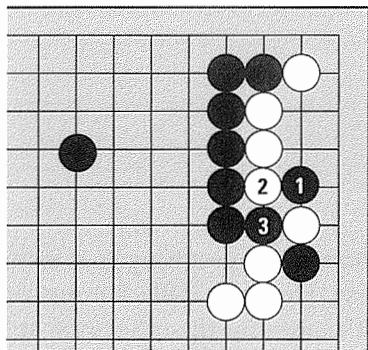


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. Jump-cutting on this side with Black 1 doesn't work, though, if White avoids the empty triangle and uses her stones efficiently by stretching to 2. Now Black can't cut - since if Black A, White B.

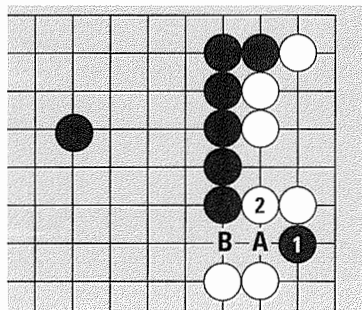
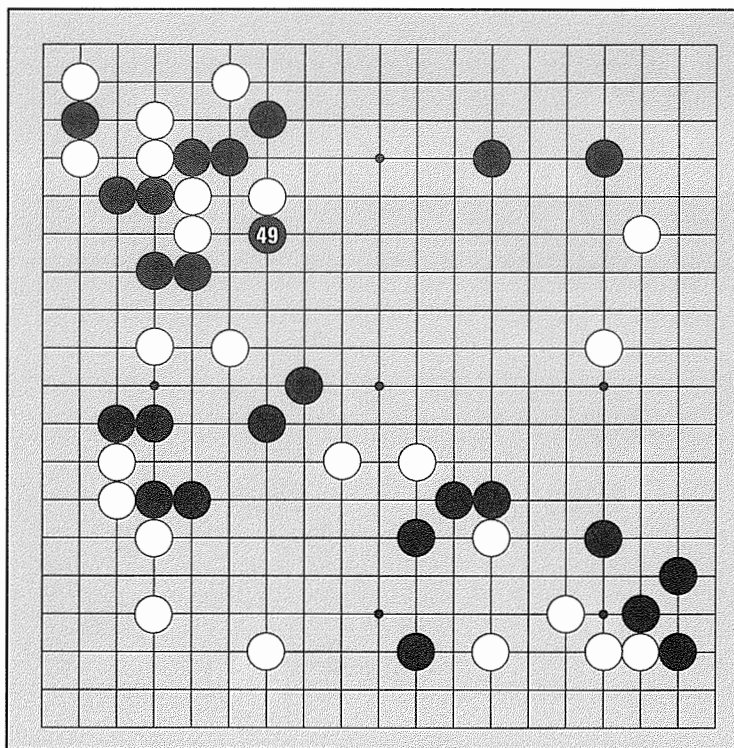


Diagram 10

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Figure 13. Black 49, preventing the bamboo joint, makes White's next move bad shape. One of the reasons why Black 49 is a nice play is that it forces White to play inefficiently. Where do you think Cho had to play to save his two stones?

Figure 13 (49)



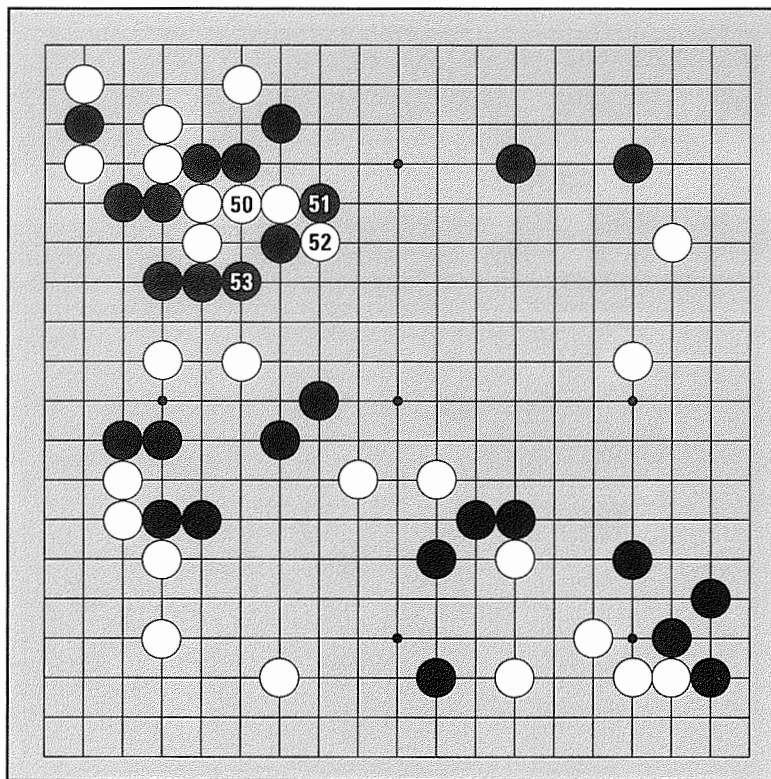
Game continues on page 48

Guidelines of Shape

7. THE EMPTY TRIANGLE

Figure 14. White had to make an empty triangle with 50 to save his two stones. Next Black played the hane at 51 and White cut at 52.

Figure 14 (50-53)



Next, one might expect Black to extend. When we were reviewing this game, I paused when I saw Black 53 – which shows just how unusual it is to see a move that doesn't follow the templates of fighting. Spotting the very rare points where there's a better move than the "template move" is what makes a good player great. However, it's important to keep in mind that in 99 cases out of 100 the situation that's just come up in your game is not one of those points.

Game continues on page 54

8. SACRIFICE TWO

There's a technique for getting maximum benefit from a sacrifice.

Diagram 1. Black ataris at 1. White can't escape by running at A. What should she do here?

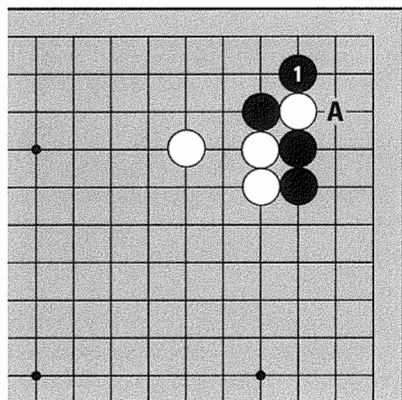


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If White ataris at 1, Black captures a stone at 2. White can extend at 3, getting some influence, but she could have done better.

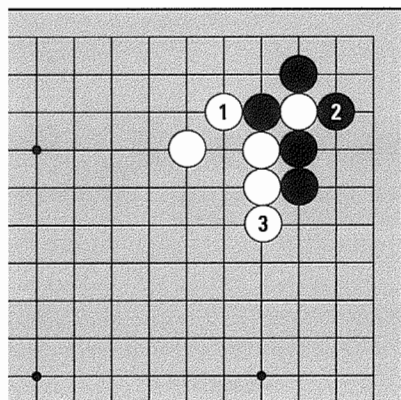
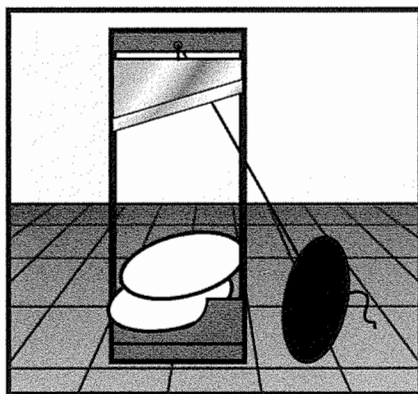


Diagram 2



8. SACRIFICE TWO

Diagram 3. In this case, White should run at 1 even though the stone can't escape. Black can surround two stones with 2, but White builds more influence. After the sente play at White 3...

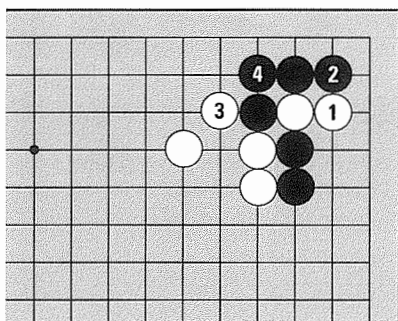


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. White can hane at 5. Black must play 6 to capture. White plays atari at 7, and then makes the tiger's-mouth connection at 9. White sacrificed an extra stone, giving Black one extra point, but she's built substantially more thickness than in Diagram 2.

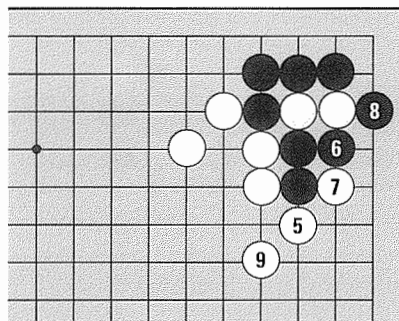


Diagram 4

As in this case, sometimes sacrificing an added stone – especially when you start from the third line – gives an optimal result.

Diagram 5. Black ataris at 1. Because of the marked stone, the white stone can't escape. But White can strengthen her weak group by sacrificing an extra stone.

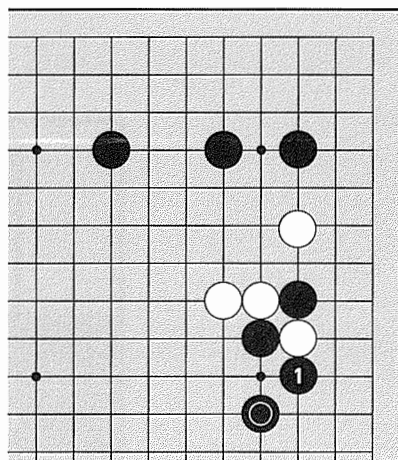


Diagram 5

8. SACRIFICE TWO

Diagram 6. Just playing atari at 1 is not very good. White can do much better.

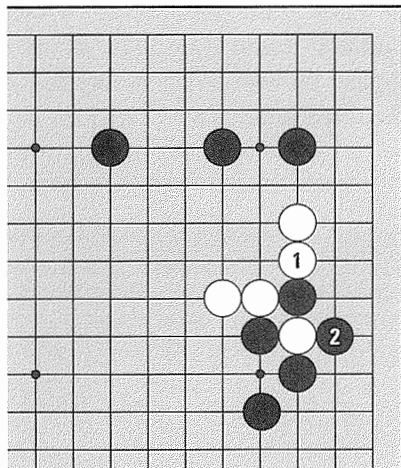


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. In this position, extending at 1 is a good idea. Black must come down at 2 to capture.

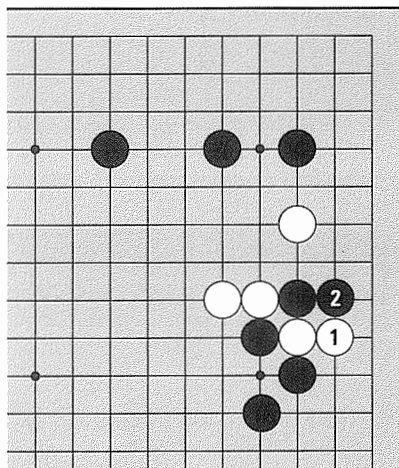


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. White 3 is sente; Black has to connect. This exchange is good for White. Next White gets another sente move at 5.

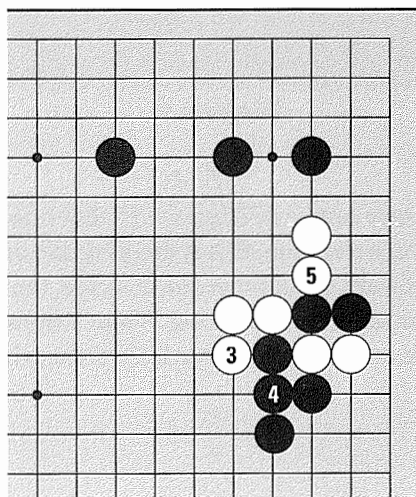


Diagram 8

Guidelines of Shape

8. SACRIFICE TWO

Diagram 9. Black has to come down at 6, and then White gets another sente move at 7. Finally after Black captures, White can secure the group by playing the vital center of symmetry point at 9.

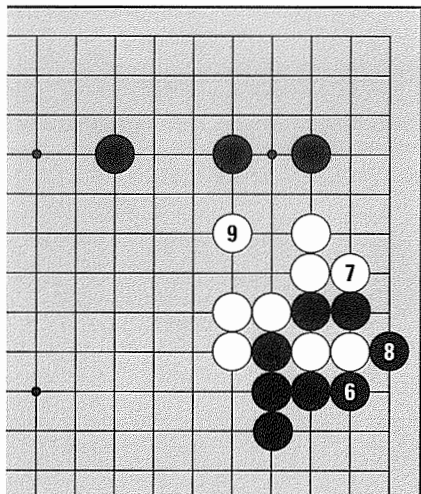


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. This is the resulting shape. Even though White gave up an extra stone, she got the marked stones – which strengthen her group – in for free. In many cases it's a good trade to sacrifice one added stone, especially, as in these examples, by extending a trapped stone on the third line.

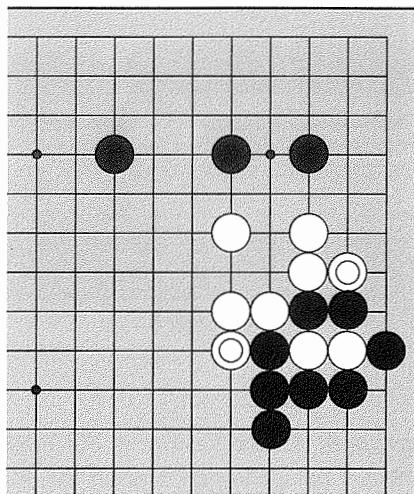


Diagram 10

You may notice in *Diagram 10* that one of White's forcing moves did make an empty triangle. As we've seen, this is theoretically an inefficient shape, but making an empty triangle is not always a bad move. In this case, the empty triangle wasn't especially inefficient because it was sente. It didn't cost White a move to play there, and the stone has some potential to make an eye on the edge later if the white group needs it.

8. SACRIFICE TWO

Diagram 11. How should White play to win the capturing race between the marked black and white stones?

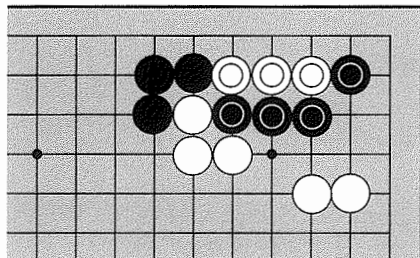


Diagram 11

Diagram 12. If Black connects at White 1, it's six liberties to three. White needs to cut there first. Then Black can catch the cutting stone with 2.

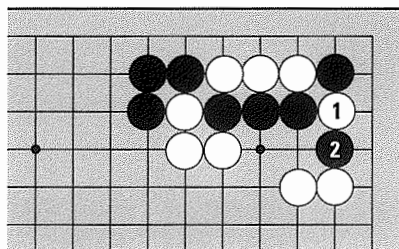


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. Next, if White ataris at 3, Black captures at 4. White can atari at 5 and Black has to connect at 6. It's now three liberties to three. However, it will take an additional approach move to block Black's liberties. So the best White can do is make ko with White A, Black B, White C, and let Black capture first at D.

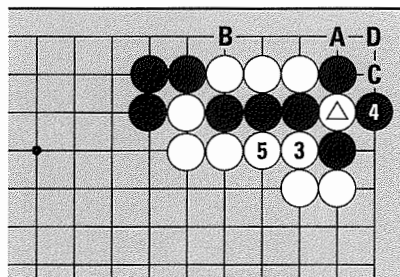


Diagram 13 6 ... △

Diagram 14. White should sacrifice one more stone at 3. If Black continues...

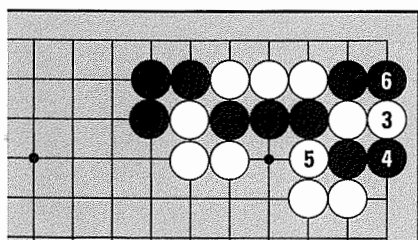


Diagram 14

Diagram 15. The throw-in at 7 reduces Black's liberties, so now White wins with no ko nonsense, three liberties to two. (If Black A, White B.)

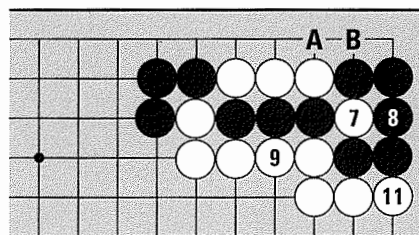


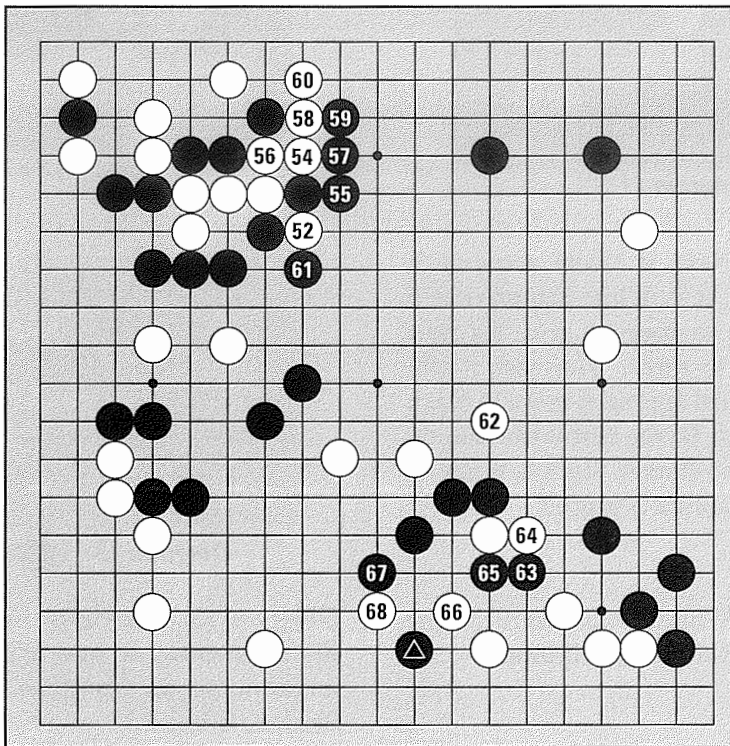
Diagram 15 10 ... 7

Guidelines of Shape

8. SACRIFICE TWO

Figure 15. Black sacrifices some stones to build a wall facing the northeast. Then the action switches to the south side. When White attaches at 68, Black would like to hane on the outside, sacrificing his marked stone to build another wall. Can you think of something Black should do first to get the most from this sacrifice?

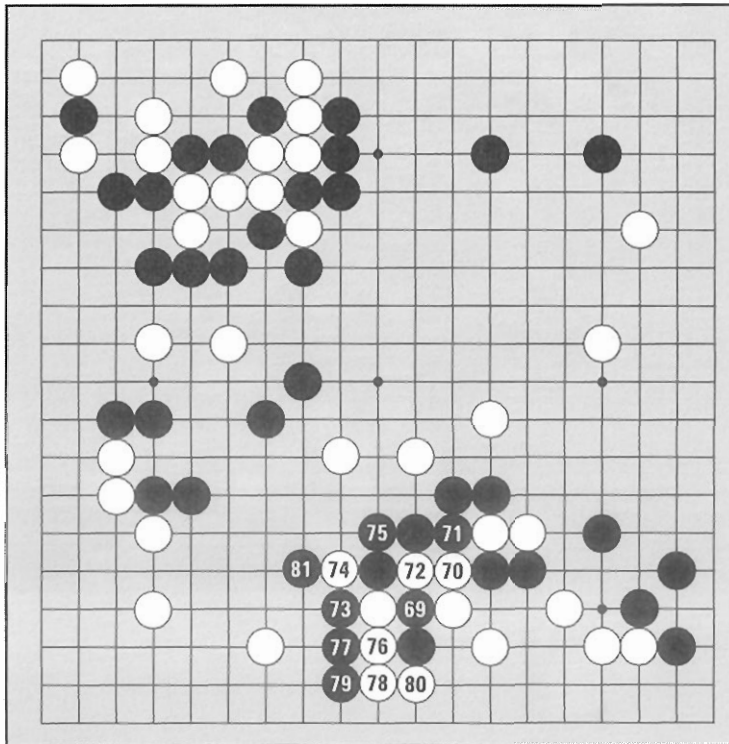
Figure 15 (52-68)



8. SACRIFICE TWO

Figure 16. Sacrificing an extra stone by playing 69 gives Black a little more momentum so he can plaster the outside with 73, 75, and 79 in sente.

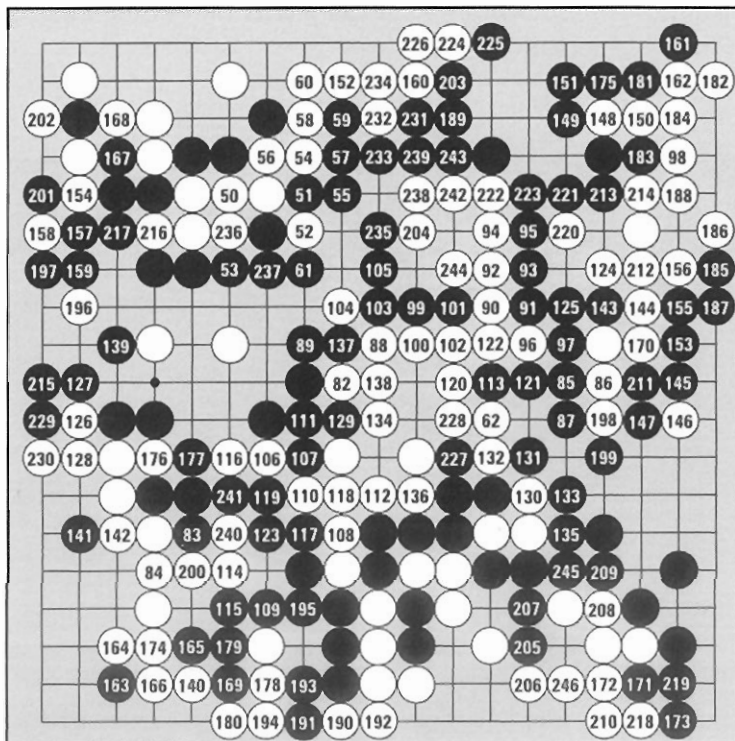
Figure 16 (69-81)



Guidelines of Shape

SAMPLE GAME ENDS

Figure 17 (82-237)



Black wins by 2 1/2 points.

9. CAP, KNIGHT'S MOVE

A cap is a kind of one-point approach, but from the center instead of the side.

Diagram 1. How should Black respond to White's cap at 1?

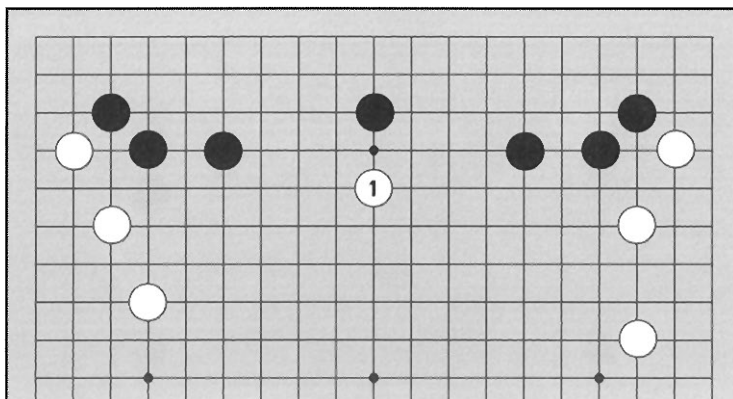


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. The knight's move at 2 or at A is good. Either move gets Black out from under the cap.

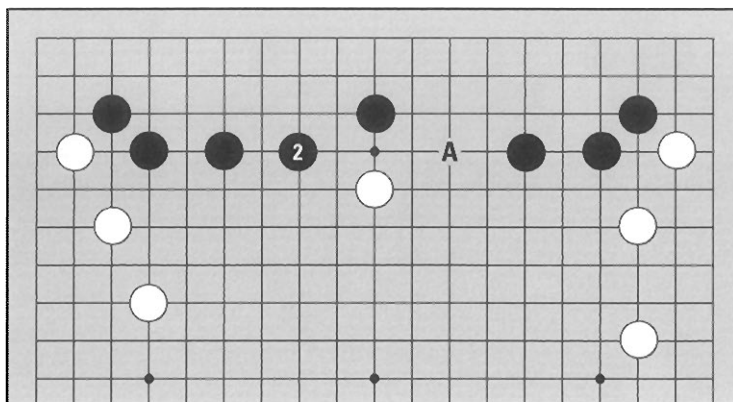


Diagram 2

Guidelines of Shape

9. CAP, KNIGHT'S MOVE

Diagram 3. This position comes up frequently in handicap games. White approaches Black's one-point jump at 1, Black plays a pincer with 2, White jumps out at 3, and Black jumps out at 4. Next, White may play a capping move at 5. How should Black respond?

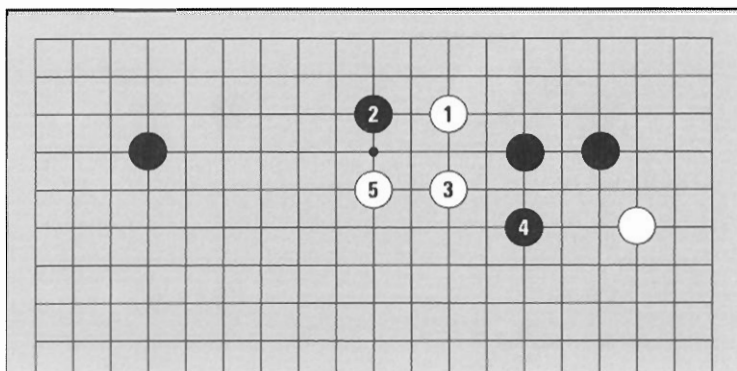


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. The knight's move at 6 in response to the cap is good.

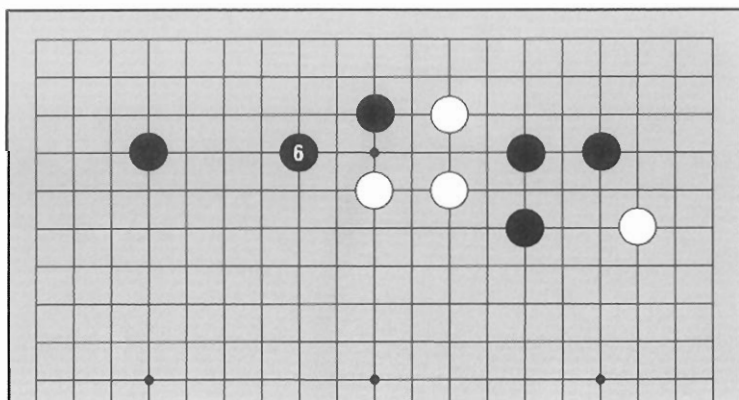
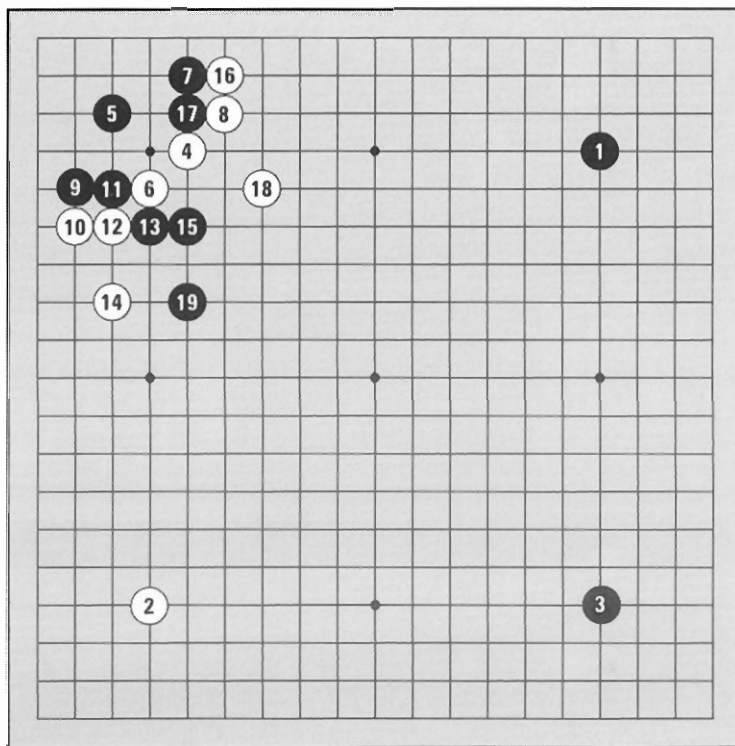


Diagram 4

9. CAP, KNIGHT'S MOVE

Figure 1. This game is between Yu Chang-hyuk 6 dan (White) and Choe Byoung-ho 7 dan played on September 29, 1995 in the Wang Ki League. After Yu played 19, where do you think White played?

Figure 1 (1-19)

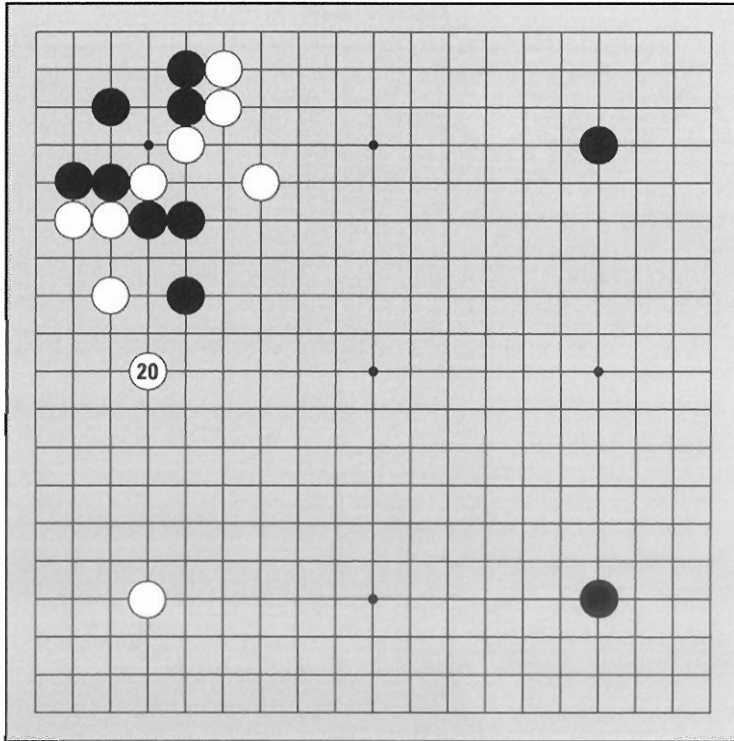


Guidelines of Shape

9. CAP, KNIGHT'S MOVE

Figure 2. Black 19 is a cap, so White 20, the knight's move, is an appropriate response.

Figure 2 (20)



Game continues on page 65

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Diagram 1. Notice that this position is exactly symmetrical. Where should White play to ensure life?

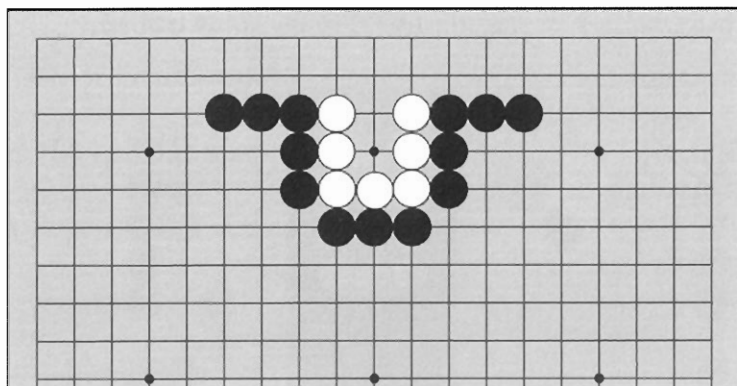


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If White tries to enlarge the group's base at 1, playing at 2 (along the previous position's center of symmetry) kills the white group. If White 3, Black 4, and if White 4, Black 3. Try to confirm for yourself that White can't make two eyes.

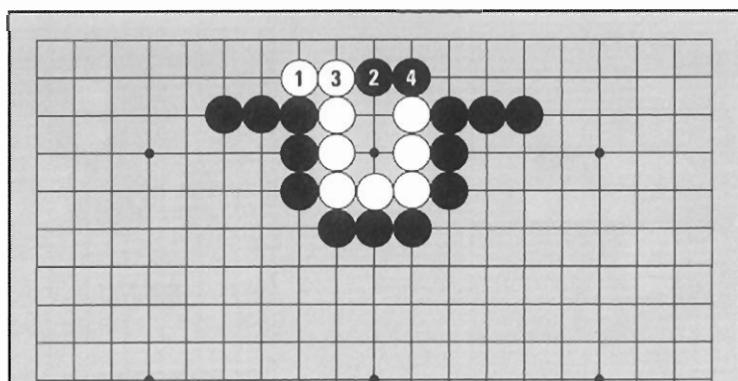


Diagram 2

Guidelines of Shape

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Diagram 3. In this case, a play along the center of symmetry is the vital point for making two eyes. White can get a second eye by playing either A or B (these points reflect – if Black plays one, White plays the other) so the group is alive.

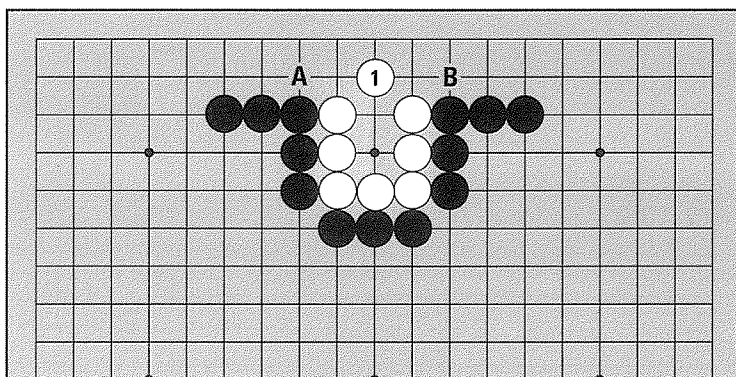


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. The position doesn't have to be perfectly symmetrical for the "center" to be a key point; it just needs a symmetrical element. Here, where should Black play to live?

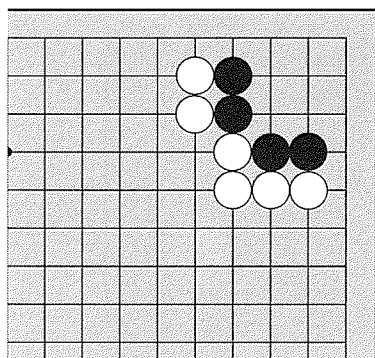


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Black 1 is the vital point. It's along the center of Black's symmetrical shape.

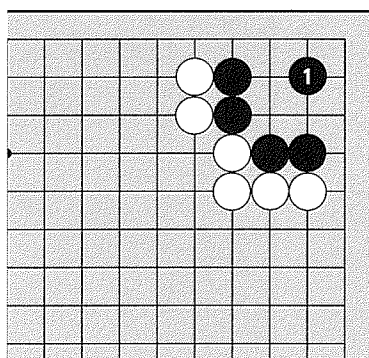


Diagram 5

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Diagram 6. Even when the symmetrical shape faces out, A is the key point.

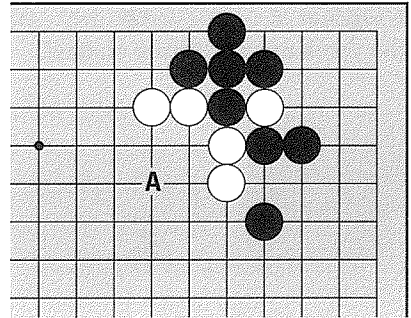


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. White 1 is the right place to protect these stones. If White omits this move...

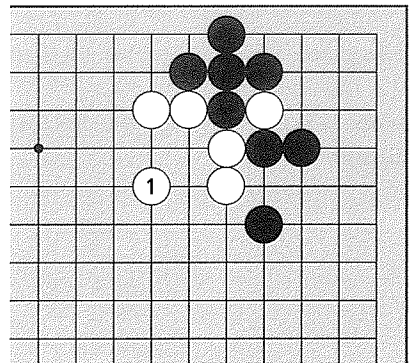


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. Black 1 is the right place to play to attack. White will have difficulty settling these stones.

On a similar note, the so-called “center of three stones” is also a key point.

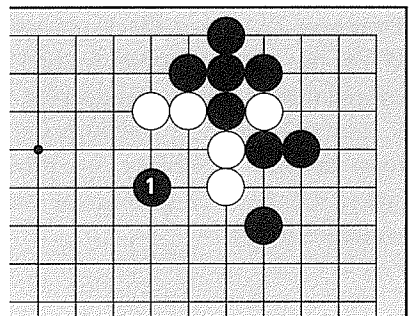


Diagram 8

Guidelines of Shape

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Diagram 9. What is the key “center” point of the three marked white stones?

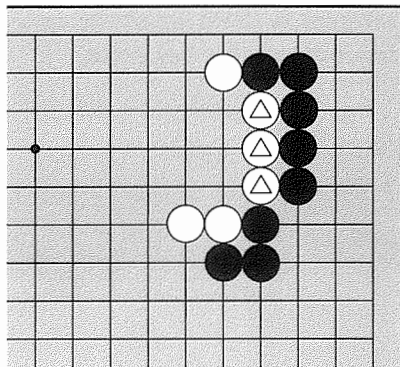


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. The “center of three stones” is in the middle, one point away. If Black plays there with 1, White’s group will become an unwieldy clump.

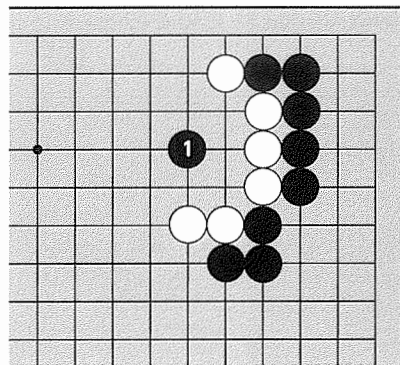


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. Once Black plays the vital point, White has cutting points to deal with. If White connects at 2, Black can peep at 3 and block at 5. Instead of serving any purpose, White’s stones have become a liability – a group that White either will have to give up or drag to safety at enormous cost.

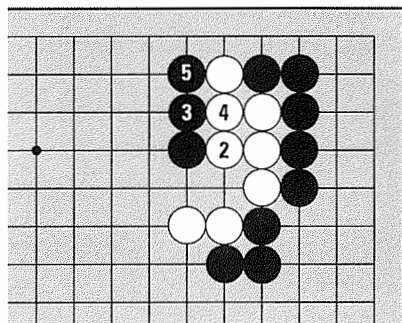
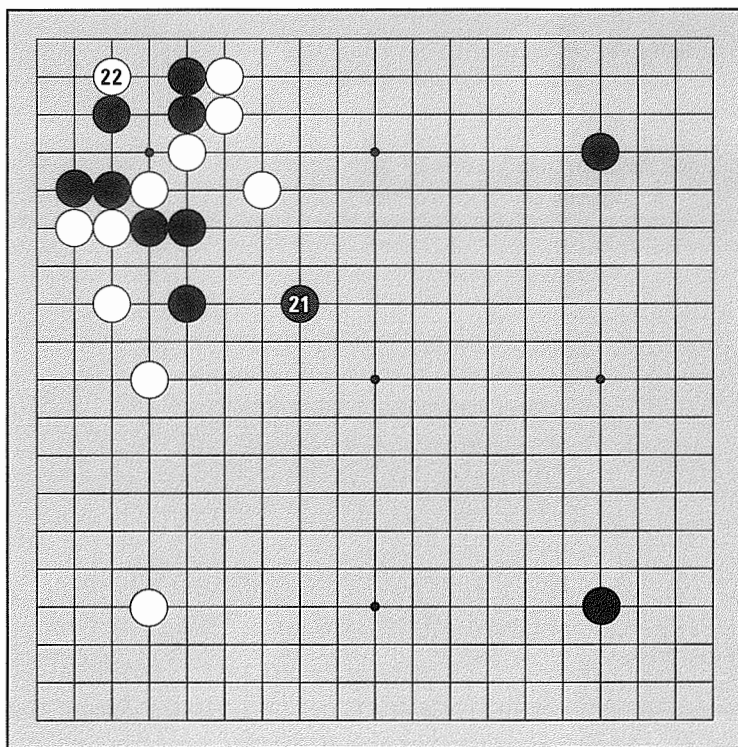


Diagram 11

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Figure 3. How do you think Black should respond when White prevents the bamboo joint at 22? A play along the center of symmetry would be a good step towards securing life for his group in the corner.

Figure 3 (21-22)

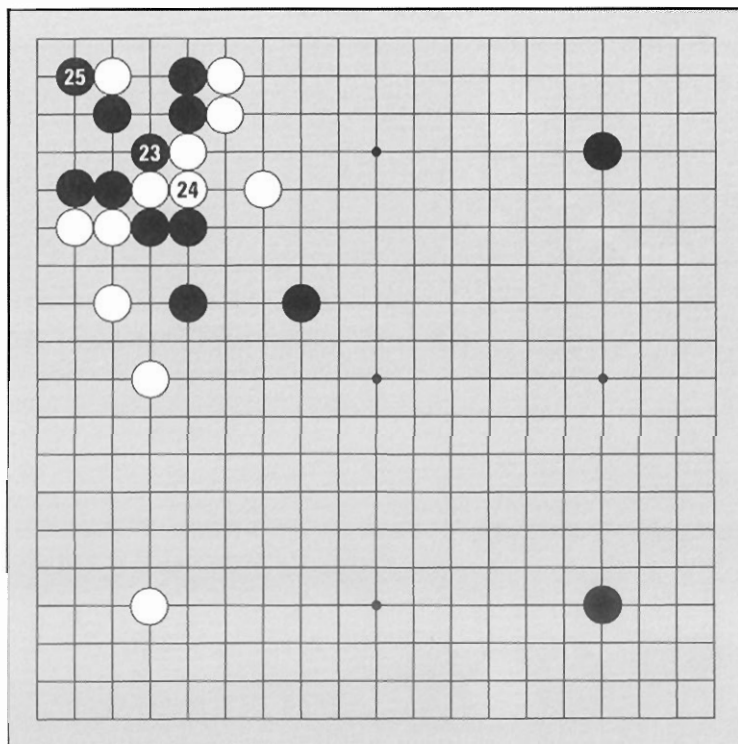


Guidelines of Shape

10. THE CENTER OF SYMMETRY

Figure 4. Actually, Black plays two points along the center of symmetry. Black 23 is atari. Next, White connects and Black secures life at 25.

Figure 4 (23-25)



EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

Why do you think White attached at 22, if it's not difficult for Black to handle? Black will hane at 25 in response to White's attachment, but first he needs to make a quick sente exchange. White's not just seeing if Black will make a mistake...White wants to force Black to play 23, and then White will attack the outside group after getting in the solid connection at 24.

Game continues on page 70

11. PEEP, CONNECT

I remember watching a title game years ago in which the players each had a nine-hour time limit. Since this requires two days, at the end of the first day the next move is “sealed”, that is, told to the referee so that theoretically neither side can use the break time to think about it. The last move played was a peep, and I remember that evening thinking long and hard about how Black should answer it, devising very involved and subtle continuations. The next morning the sealed move was a simple, ordinary connection. There’s a proverb that says “Even a moron connects against the peep,” but I guess I hadn’t fully grasped the significance of the word “even.” And yes, that peep was mainly a slightly cheesy way for White to eliminate the uncertainty of the sealed-move rule.

Diagram 1. How should Black respond to White’s peep?

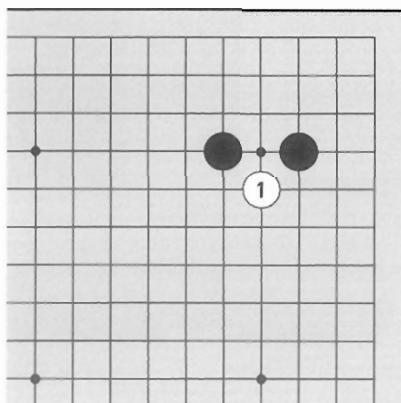
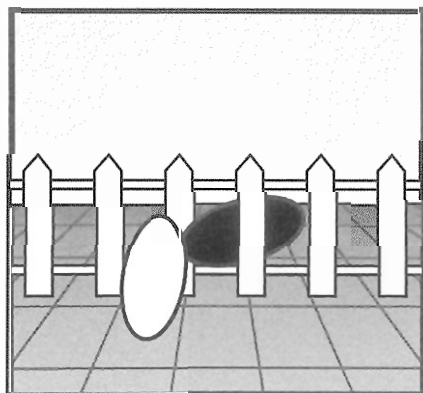


Diagram 1



Guidelines of Shape

11. PEEP, CONNECT

Diagram 2. Black should connect at 2.

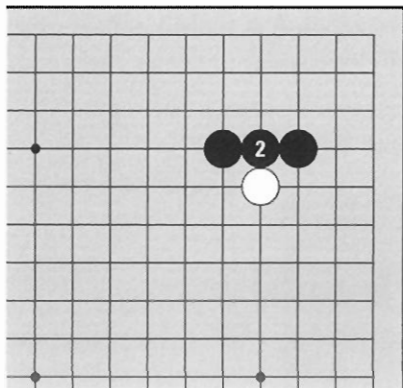


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. If Black doesn't connect, White pushes in and cuts with 1 and 3. Black is in trouble.

Since it's a good idea to connect against a peep, you'll want to avoid "pre-peeped" positions.

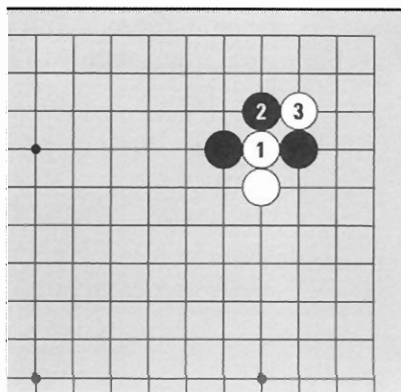


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. With 1, Black is volunteering to be cut. This is the same as if White peeps and Black doesn't connect.

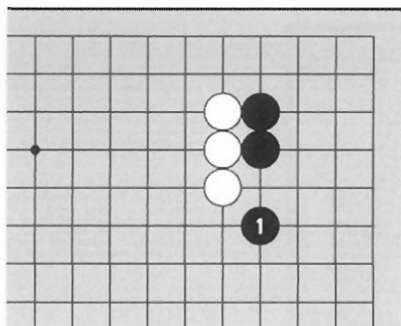


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. If White pushes in at 2 and cuts at 4, Black's position is a mess.

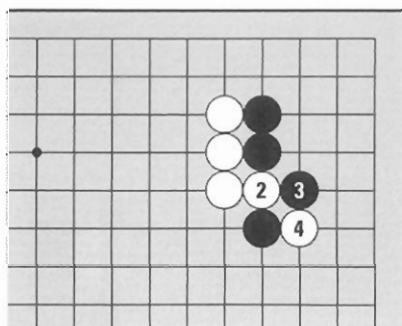


Diagram 5

11. PEEP, CONNECT

Diagram 6. The knight's move of Black 1 is correct in this case. If White still pushes in at 2, now Black can answer at 3, leaving no weaknesses. (By the way, White 2 is not a good move – it's not a good idea to push in if there's no cut.)

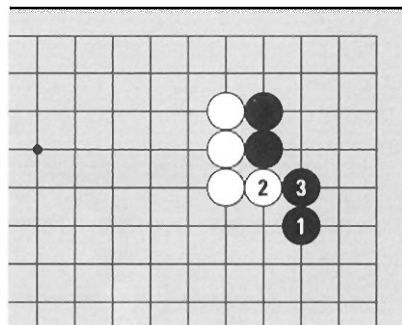


Diagram 6

Special Note: This case is a little different.

Diagram 7. The reason why “pre-peeped” positions are often bad is because they can be cut. However, when the cut isn't a problem, moves like White 1 can be a quick way move out.

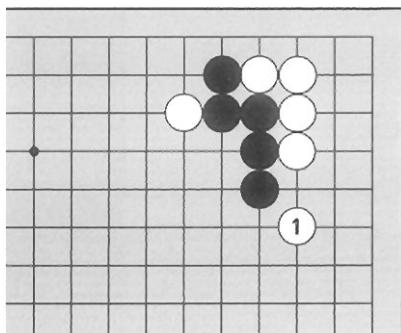


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. Jumping here is totally safe. If Black pushes through and cuts at 4, White can catch the cutting stone at 5 with no problems. Black shouldn't be pushing in like this when there's no cut.

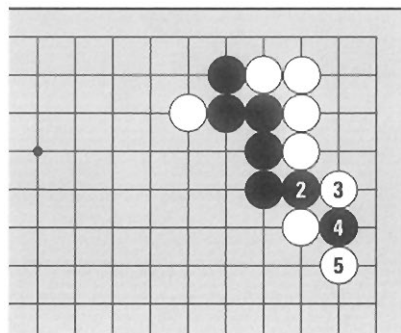


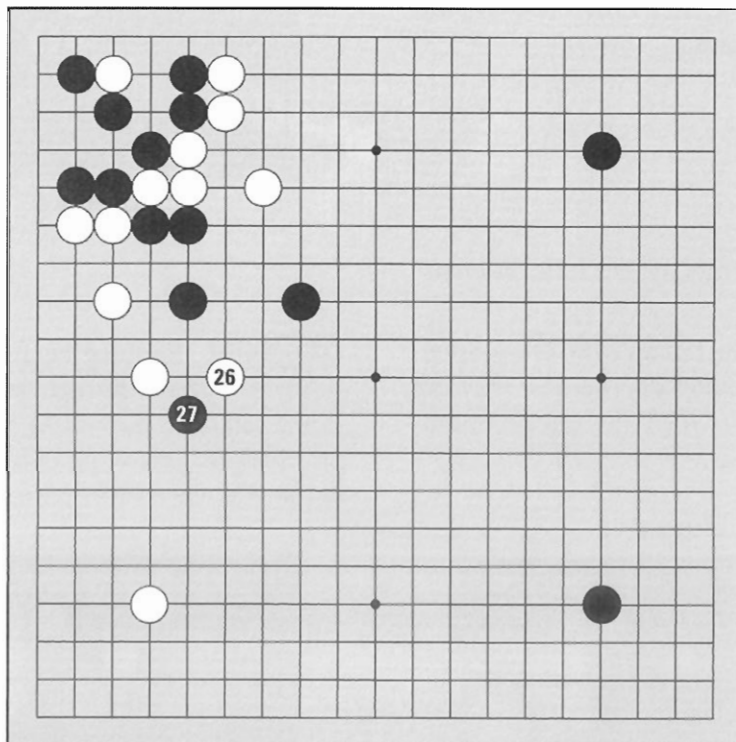
Diagram 8

Guidelines of Shape

11. PEEP, CONNECT

Figure 5. How did White respond to Black 27?

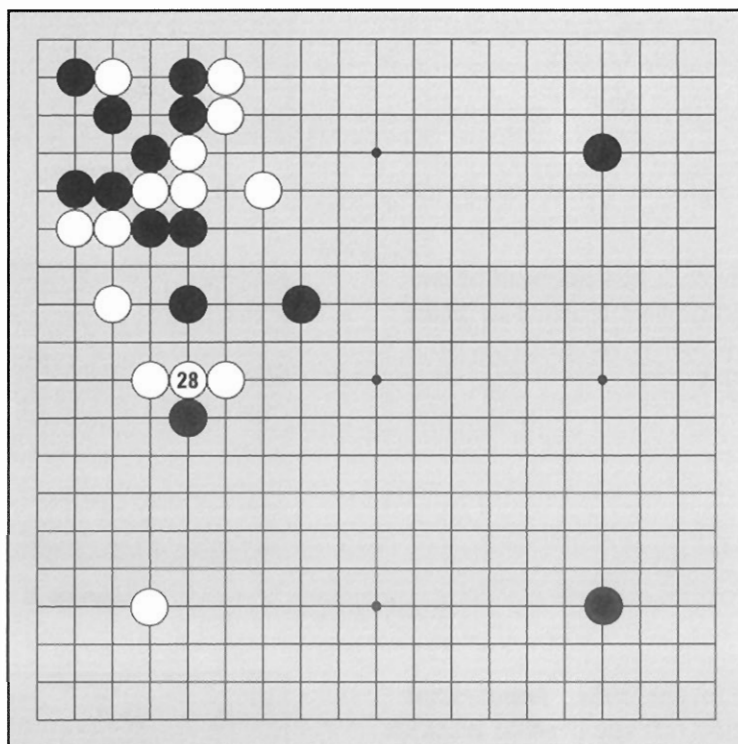
Figure 5 (26-27)



11. PEEP, CONNECT

Figure 6. A simple connection at White 28 is the best response to White's peep.

Figure 6 (28)



Moves after 28 omitted.

12. HIT THE HEAD OF TWO (OR THREE)

Diagram 1. It makes a big difference who hits the head of two stones first. (The following examples show hitting the head of two stones, but hitting the head of three stones is good also.)

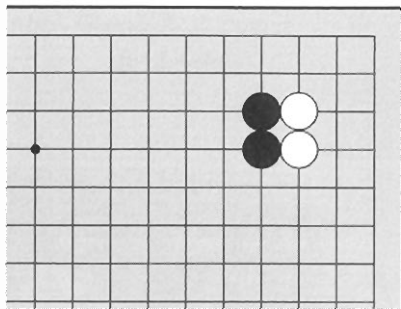


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If Black hits the head of two stones at 1, White gets crushed as Black grows stronger. When White hanes at 2, Black just extends at 3.

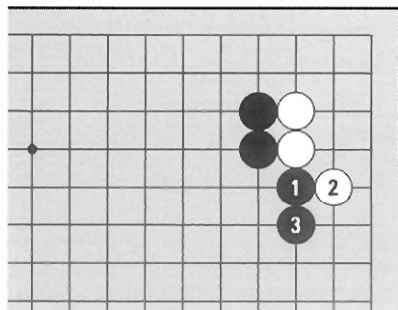


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. On the other hand, what happens if White hits the head of Black's two stones? This time, White's position blooms while Black's gets ugly. Whenever possible, avoid letting your opponent hit the key point at the head of two stones.

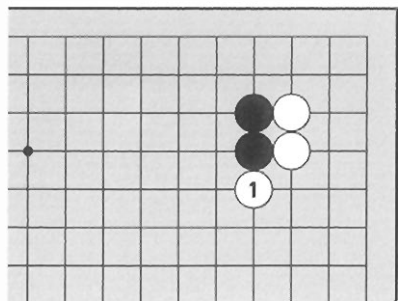


Diagram 3

12. HIT THE HEAD OF TWO (OR THREE)

Diagram 4. Black pushes up at 4. How should White respond?

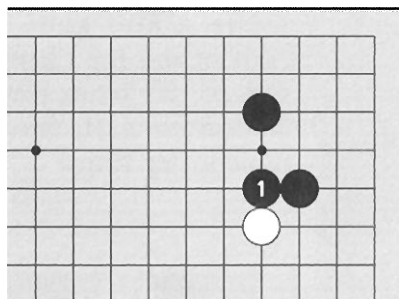


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Blocking at 2 is bad, because Black can then hit the head of two at 3.

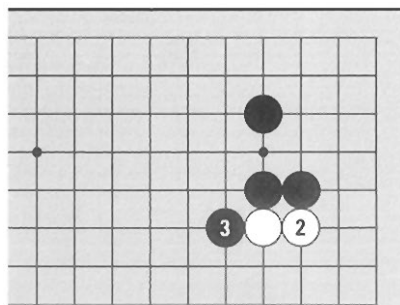


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. White should extend at 2. If Black pushes at A then White extends again at B. This is just like the diagonal template.

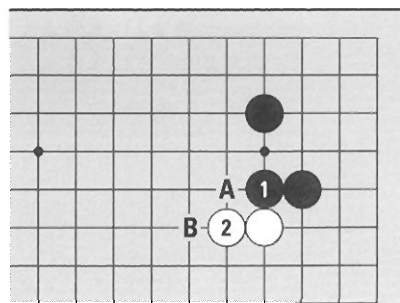


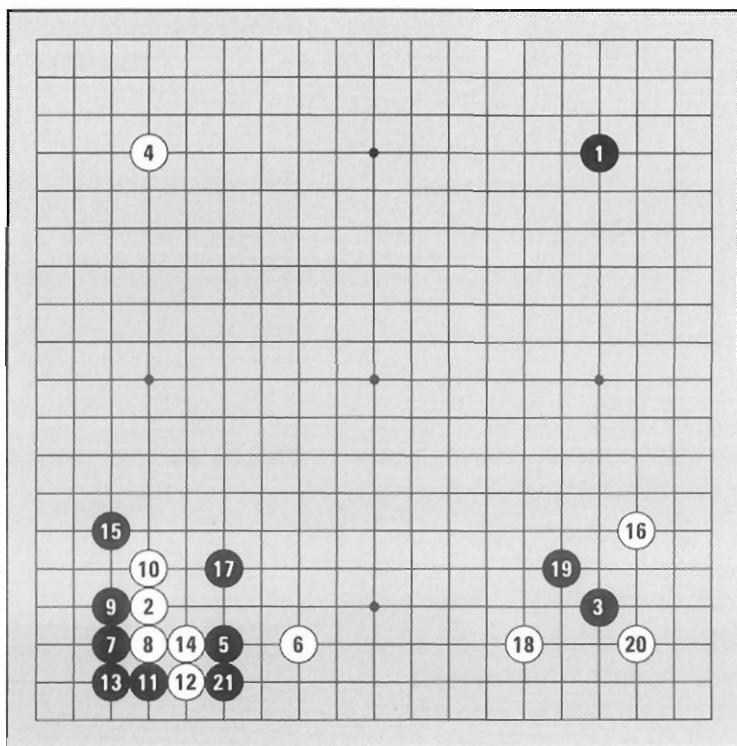
Diagram 6

Guidelines of Shape

12. HIT THE HEAD OF TWO (OR THREE)

Figure 1. This game is between Cho Hoon-hyun 9 dan (White) and Lee Chang-ho 7 dan in the first match of the Guksoo title series, played on August 25, 1995. When Black plays down at 21, threatening to cross under, what's a good response for White?

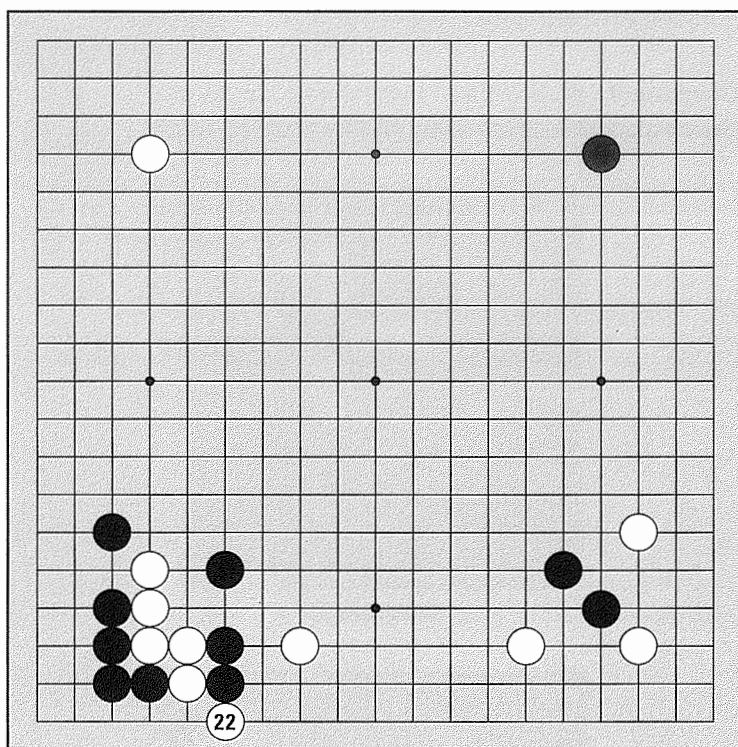
Figure 1 (1-21)



12. HIT THE HEAD OF TWO (OR THREE)

Figure 2. The hane at 22, hitting the head of two stones, is the best response. It prevents Black from sneaking underneath and fills a black liberty. Now White is threatening to cross under himself.

Figure 2 (22)



Moves after 22 omitted.

Guidelines of Shape

13. THE SQUEEZE

There are times when neither the net nor the ladder work and you can't capture, but by sacrificing a stone you can squeeze your opponent's stones together into an inefficient mass. In fact, the squeeze technique can leave such a sorry shape in its wake that often your opponent is better off just letting stones go even if they could have been saved. To enjoy the not-to-be-missed satisfaction of a good squeeze, remember:

*"Water's cold but fish don't freeze,
If the net don't work then try to squeeze."*

Diagram 1. Black's three easternmost stones are cut off, but there's a good squeeze using Black's marked stone.

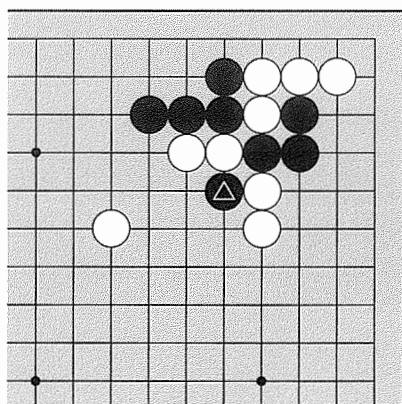
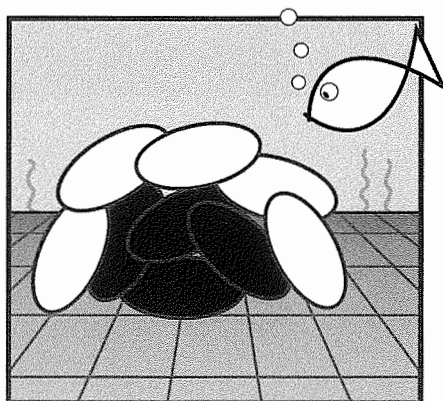


Diagram 1



13. THE SQUEEZE

Diagram 2. Black 1 doesn't work; White's marked stone is a ladderbreaker.

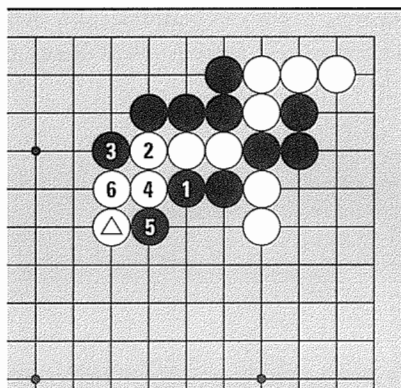


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. Black 1, playing the net even though it doesn't capture, sets up the squeeze.

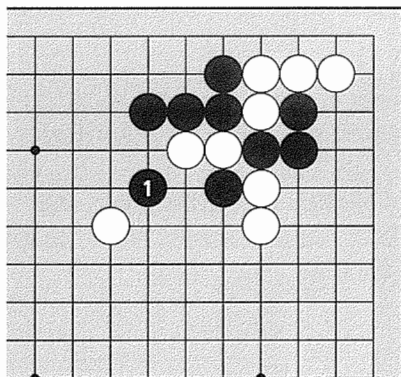


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. When White comes out at 2, Black plays atari at 3. White can capture one stone at 4, but...

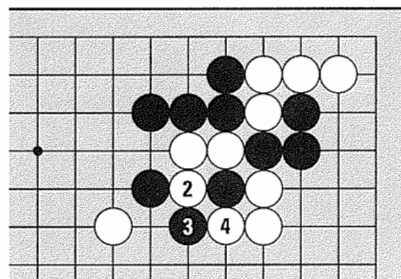


Diagram 4

Guidelines of Shape

13. THE SQUEEZE

Diagram 5. Black can play atari at 5. White's connection at 6 is forced. Next Black connects at 7.

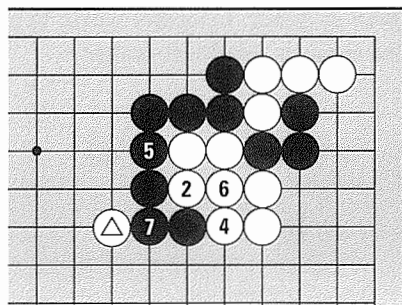


Diagram 5

What do you think of the result in *Diagram 5*? Black didn't save his three stones or capture any white stones, but rather sacrificed one stone to get a very thick wall outside. White's marked stone is useless, and she has an inefficient "dumpling" shape.

Diagram 6. If you have the misfortune of being well-squeezed, it's often better just to let it go. In this case, Black 1 has almost netted White's marked stone. If she wants to, White can pull it out. Would that be a good idea?

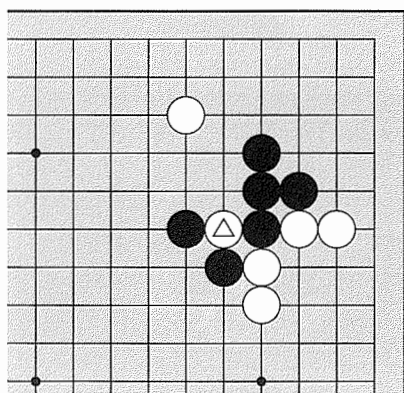


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. White can save one stone, but this is the resulting shape. White prevented Black from getting one point, but she has nearly written off the north side, and has a heavy clump of stones to deal with to boot. It would have been better not to have saved her stone.

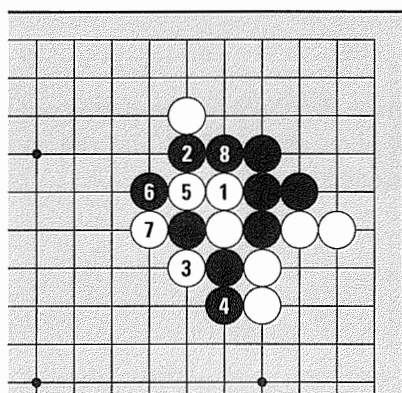
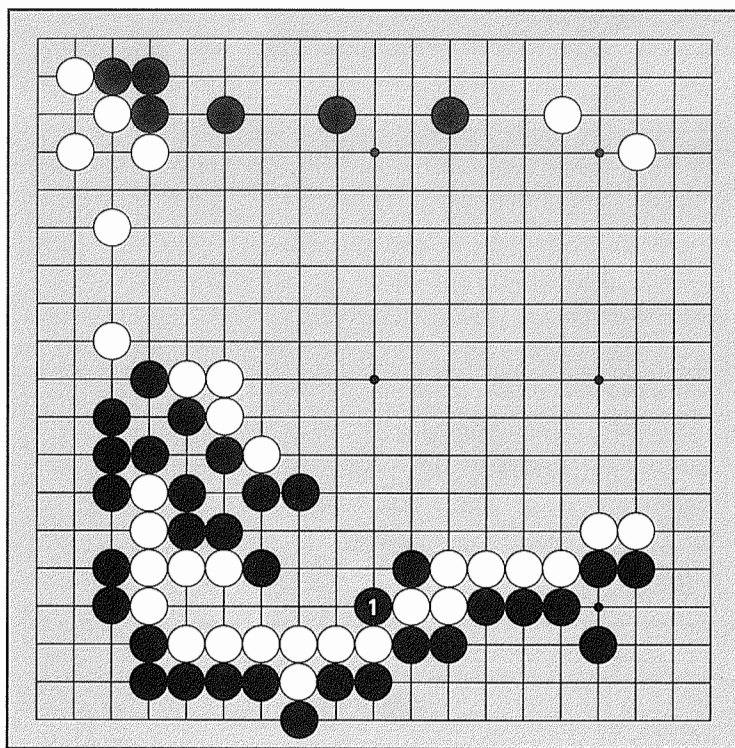


Diagram 7

13. THE SQUEEZE

Figure 1. Here's a position adapted from one of my student's games. It didn't quite go like this, because White protected the cut at Black 1, but White didn't have to. If Black cuts, White can't net the cutting stone, but does he have another way of saving his stones?

Figure 1

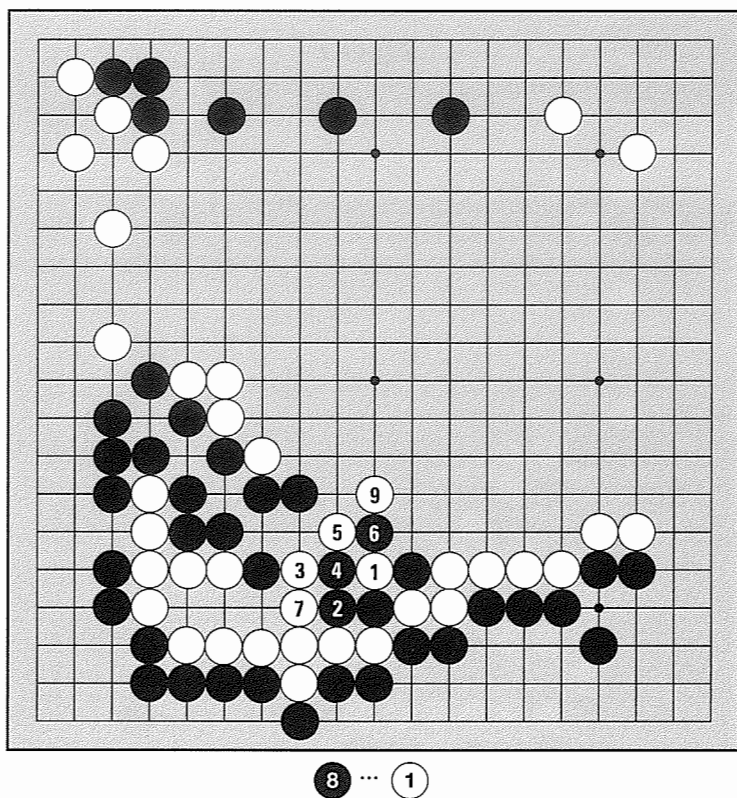


Guidelines of Shape

13. THE SQUEEZE

Figure 2. Even though the net doesn't work, White can capture the cutting stone in a ladder, after the beautiful squeezing sequence to 9.

Figure 2



14. THE STAR CAPTURE

The star capture – the formation resulting from the capture of one stone with four in an unsettled area – is called a *ponnuki* in Japanese and *bbangdaerim* in Korean.

Diagram 1. Black ataris at 1. If White plays elsewhere, then Black will capture at A. This is an excellent type of capture, said proverbially to be worth thirty points.

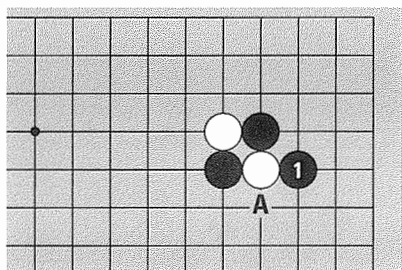


Diagram 1

Diagram 1a. The resulting shape has a major effect on the surrounding area, and in fact, on the whole board. Since it radiates power in a vacuum, my younger students like to call it the “Death Star.”

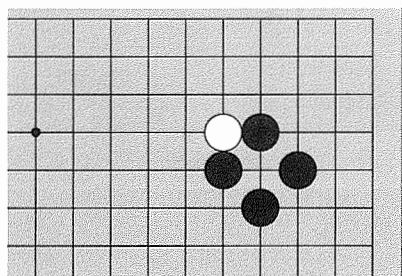


Diagram 1a

Diagram 2. If Black plays atari, it's a big move for White to save her stone by running at 2.

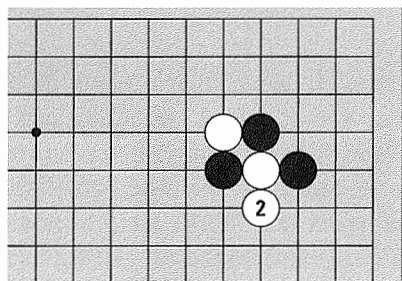


Diagram 2

It's bad to let your opponent make a star capture. Luckily, you practically have to give them away, because your opponent needs four moves to capture one stone. This is different than in the example in *Diagram 6* in the last section on the Squeeze. In that example, if Black captures the white stone in atari, the resulting shape is not a star capture - because Black has used more than four stones to capture one.

Guidelines of Shape

14. THE STAR CAPTURE

Diagram 3. In handicap games, this situation often comes up. When White plays 1, some people may be tempted to play at Black 2. Next...

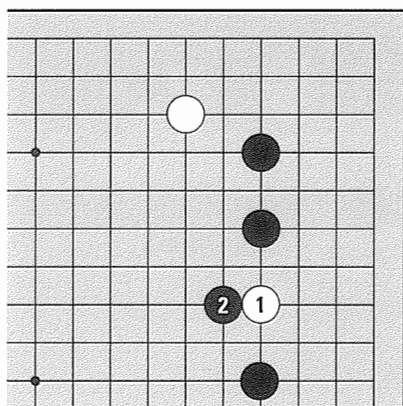


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. When White hanes at 3, Black cuts at 4. Then when White ataris at 5, Black gives up a stone to connect underneath. It's not always easy to distinguish a potential star capture worth thirty points from the capture of a non-essential stone worth only one or two points. However, this is an example of a thirty-point capture.

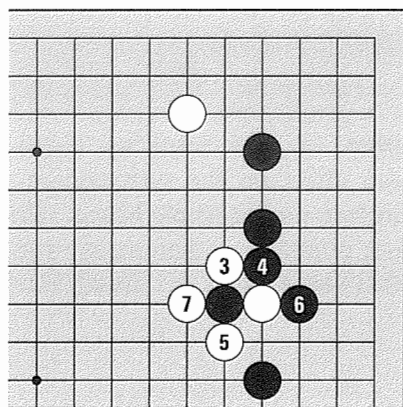


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Next, Black plays at 8 to prevent a move at A, so White can seal him in at 9. Even though Black has made some territory on the side, what's really happened is that White has jumped into Black's area and ended up getting a lot of influence. It's no exaggeration to say that in the end – compared to what would have happened if Black had played optimally – this capture probably added thirty points to White's score.

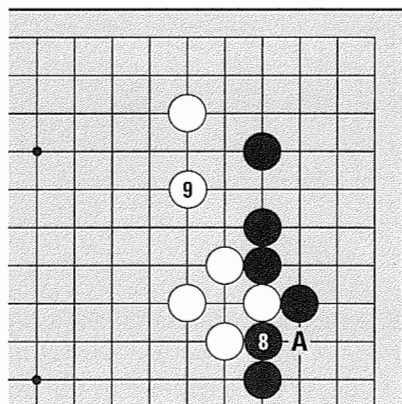
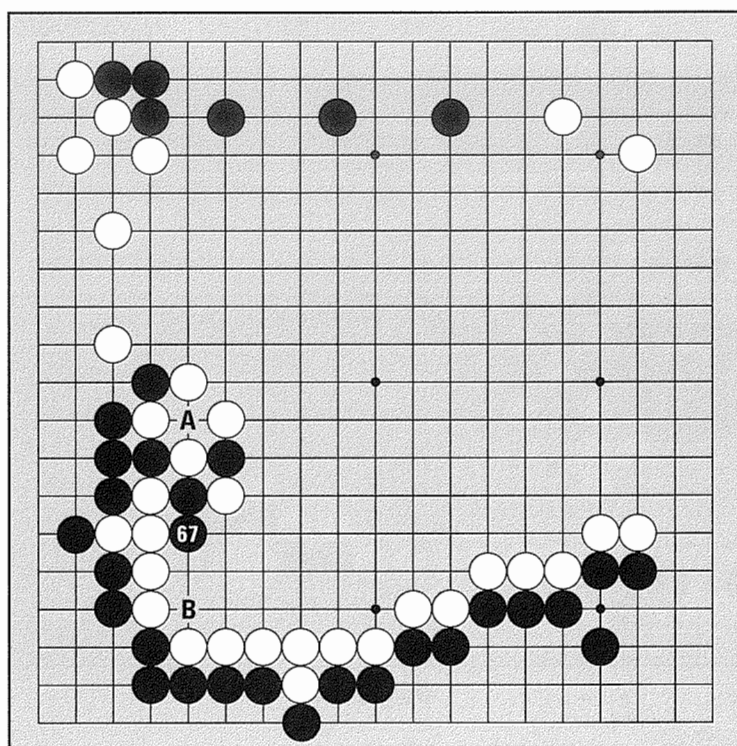


Diagram 5

14. THE STAR CAPTURE

Figure 1. It's difficult to find an example of a star capture in professional play, as we usually try to avoid it at all costs. But its value is often missed in amateur play. In this game with my student Mr. X as White, instead of capturing at A, Black extended at 67, threatening to capture five White stones at B. Where should White play next?

Figure 1 (67)



Guidelines of Shape

14. THE STAR CAPTURE

Diagram 1. Black clearly thought that White would protect his five stones, but in fact the star capture at 68 is far larger. If Black captures five stones, White has an opportunity to make a huge framework in the sequence to 72.

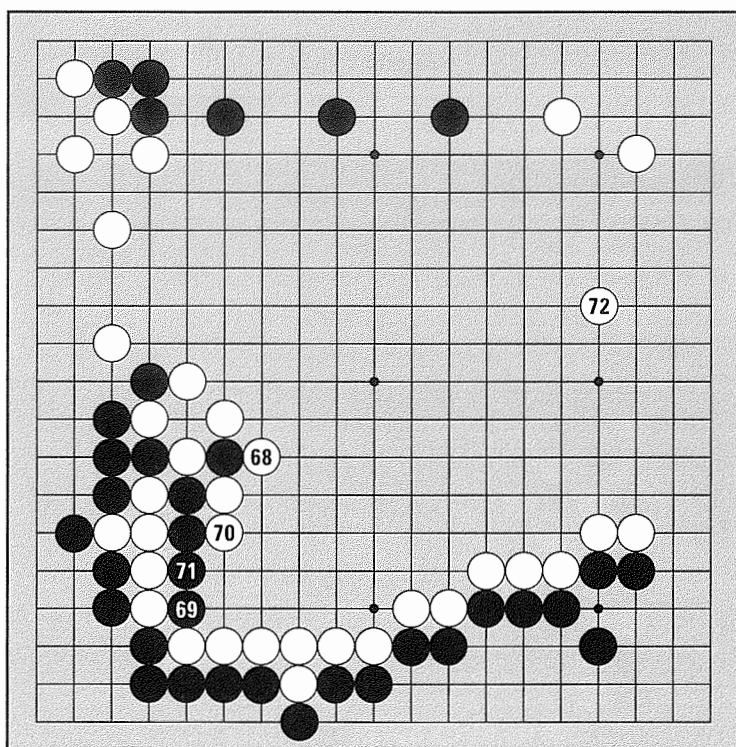
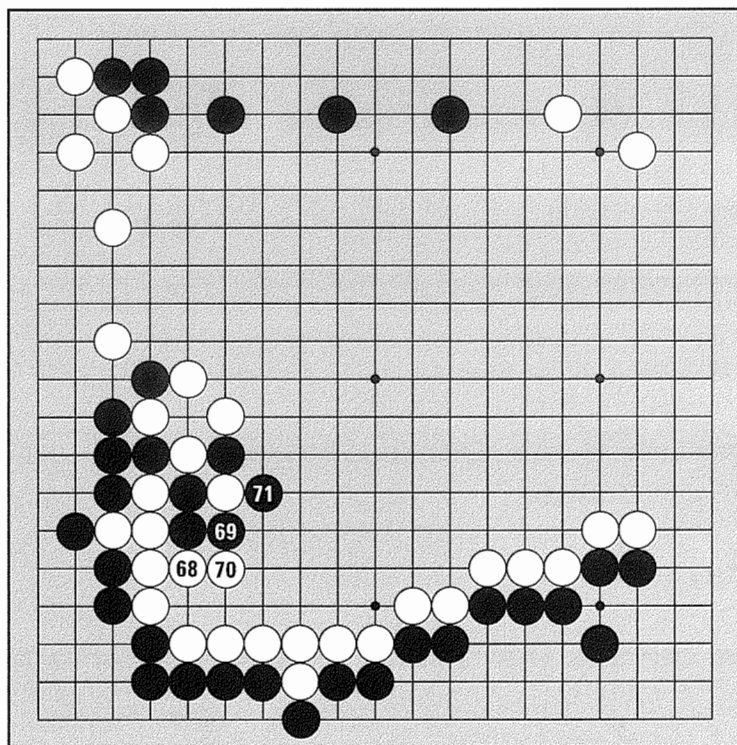


Diagram 1

14. THE STAR CAPTURE

Figure 2. Unfortunately White missed his chance, and saved his five stones.

Figure 2 (68-71)



Opening Guides

OPENING GUIDES

A good opening, in which your stones map out territory efficiently, makes for a good position in middle game fighting. You can play a good opening following these nine basic principles:

1. FIRST, PLAY IN THE CORNERS IN ONE OF FIVE WAYS.
2. NEXT, ENCLOSE OR APPROACH "UNBALANCED" CORNERS.
3. AFTER THE CORNERS, PLAY IN THE SIDE STAR REGIONS.
4. MAKE SECONDARY SIDE EXTENSIONS THAT AIM AT INVASIONS.
5. AFTER THE SIDES, ENLARGE AND DEFEND TOWARDS THE CENTER.
6. THE THIRD LINE IS THE LINE OF TERRITORY; THE FOURTH LINE IS THE LINE OF INFLUENCE.
7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE.
8. BASES ARE CRUCIAL. DON'T MAKE GROUPS WITHOUT A BASE.
9. STAY AWAY FROM STRENGTH.

1. PLAY IN THE CORNERS IN ONE OF FIVE WAYS

It's easiest to make territory in the corner, so the game usually begins with players staking these easy claims first. The star point and the 3-4 point are the most common moves, but the 3-3, 3-5, and 4-5 points are also possibilities.

Diagram 1. Playing in the corner at the star point is one of the popular features of modern Go. A hundred years ago this move was considered unplayable, but it is now one of the most common opening plays.

The star point is good for creating influence and leads to a rapid opening development, with its emphasis on extending along the sides rather than enclosing the corner. It's not too great for making territory directly though – its weakness is the invasion at the 3-3 point.

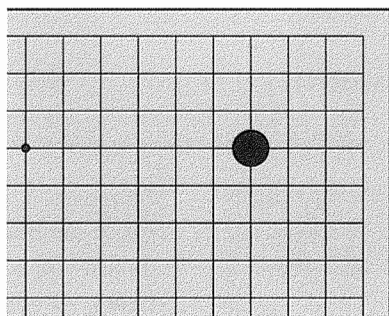
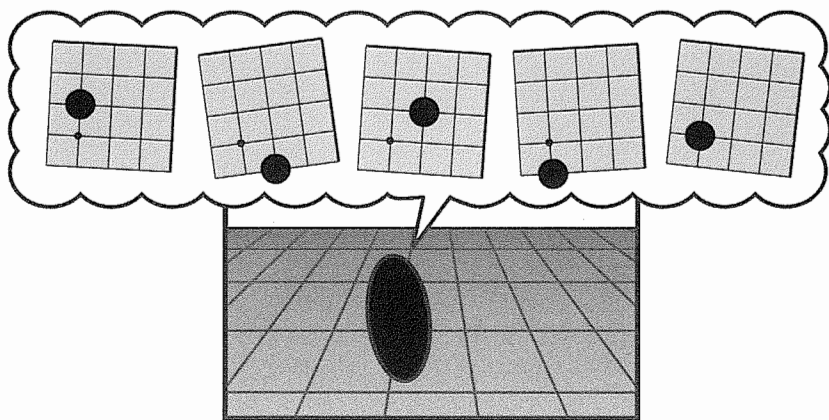


Diagram 1



Opening Guides

1. PLAY IN THE CORNERS IN ONE OF FIVE WAYS

Diagram 2. The 3-4 point is the classic move for playing in the corner, and is still just as popular as the star point. It's got the advantage in making territory in the corner, but it's not quite so powerful.

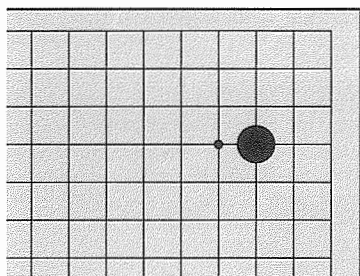


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. The 3-3 point is another move that was once considered unplayable, but was re-evaluated in the modern Go era. Its low position makes the 3-3 point a sure-fire way to take territory in the corner. But its influence is very limited compared to the star point's.

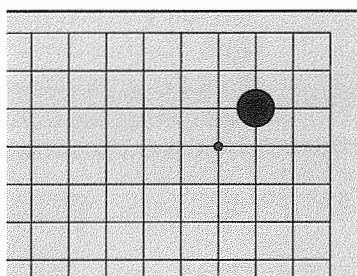


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. The 3-5 point emphasizes the side. Its drawback is that it leaves the corner relatively open (A is also the 3-5 point).

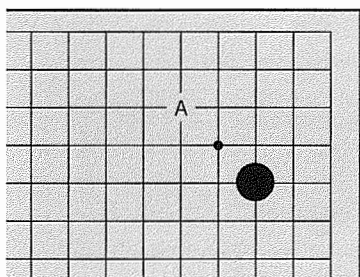


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. The 4-5 point is best in jockeying for position in the center, but again, its drawback is that it leaves the corner territory vulnerable (A is also 4-5 point).

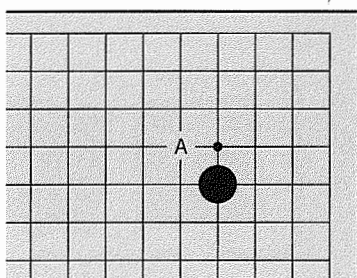


Diagram 5

Each of these moves has pros and cons. But the star point and the 3-4 point are played most often, since not only are they easier to use, but their weaknesses are more subtle than the others.

1. PLAY IN THE CORNERS IN ONE OF FIVE WAYS

Diagram 6. Here's an opening seen in many professional games. Each side has played a star point and a 3-4 point. Incidentally, it's considered polite for Black always to play his first move in the northeast corner (that is, his upper right hand corner) first. Since the board is symmetrical and the choice of corner doesn't really matter, one might as well be polite – and also, it makes it easier to review game records.

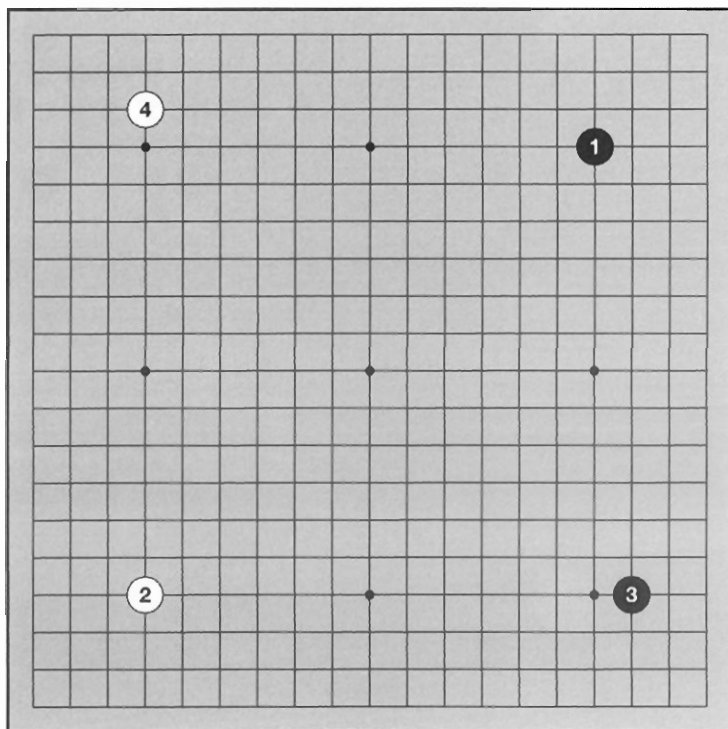


Diagram 6

This kind of opening, where Black plays first in both corners on one side, is called a parallel opening.

Opening Guides

1. PLAY IN THE CORNERS IN ONE OF FIVE WAYS

Diagram 7. Here's another common way of opening. In this case, each side has played two star points. This particular situation, where Black has played in diagonal corners, is called an X opening. It often leads to more fighting than the parallel opening.

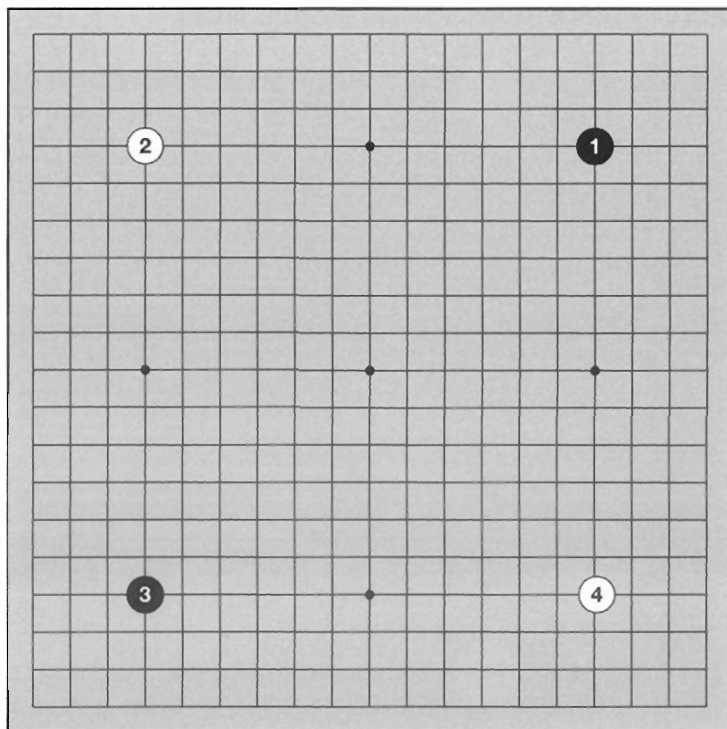


Diagram 7

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Notice that you could also call the corner star point the 4-4 point. I call the 4-4 and the 3-3 plays “balanced” because they’re an equal distance from the sides. By the same token, the 3-4, 5-3, and 5-4 points are “unbalanced”. After someone has played in each corner, the next thing on the opening agenda is to enclose or approach unbalanced corners.

Diagram 8. From the 3-4 point, only one more move is necessary to secure the corner. Black 1 is the knight’s move enclosure.

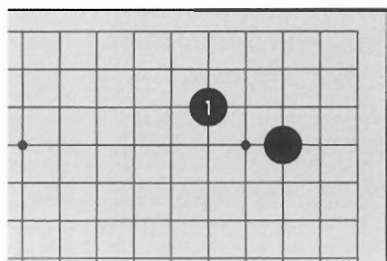


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. Black at 1 here is also possible. This is the one-point enclosure. This move has more power directed to the center, but it leaves the north side more open than the knight’s move.

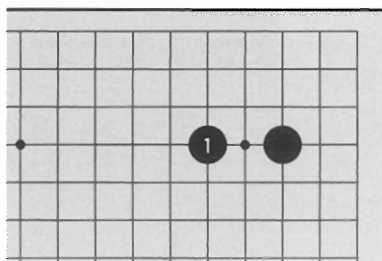


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. The standard knight’s move and the one-point are the most common enclosures, but it’s also possible to make an enclosure with a large knight’s move. This covers more ground than the ordinary knight’s move, but it’s a little weaker in securing the corner.

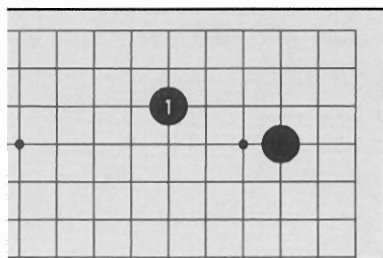


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. The two-point enclosure on the fourth line leaves the corner relatively weak, but has more influence towards the center. This move’s weakness makes it fairly rare.

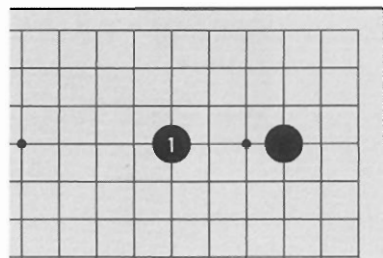


Diagram 11

Opening Guides

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 12. Each side has played in the empty corners in an X opening. Next, Black plays the knight’s-move enclosure at 5. With 6, White can either enclose the unbalanced south-east corner or approach Black’s unbalanced southwest corner. Approaching is probably preferred in this case, as it’s not good to allow your opponent to make double corner enclosures.

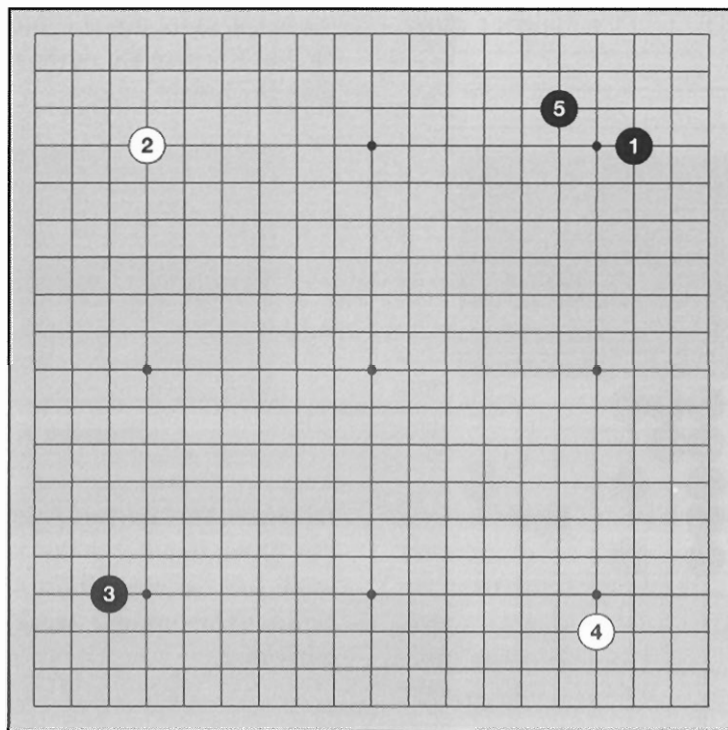


Diagram 12

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 13. From the star point, after an enclosing move, yet another enclosing move is necessary to secure the corner. Because of its weakness at the 3-3 point, the star point is not really an effective move for making corner territory.

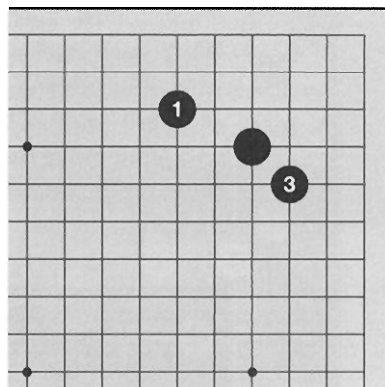


Diagram 13

Diagram 14. If you play either the large knight’s move or the one-point jump from the star point at A, you’ll also need an additional enclosing move to turn the corner into territory. Since it requires an extra move, the star point isn’t so effective as a 3-4 point for making territory. And since it isn’t the best way to make territory in the first place, the star-point option doesn’t beg for a follow-up move with the urgency of the 3-4. In other words, an enclosing move from a star point doesn’t need to be played so early in the opening.

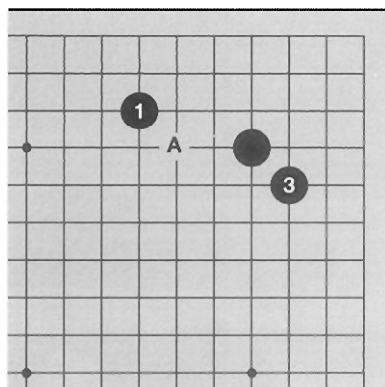


Diagram 14

Diagram 15. From a 3-3 point, you could play at either 1 or A. However, this corner is already secured, so a second move isn’t too urgent here either.

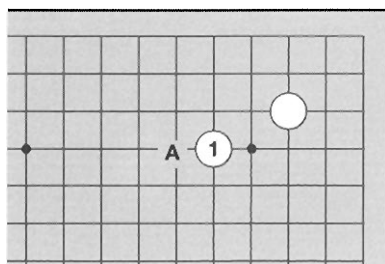


Diagram 15

Opening Guides

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 16. After playing in the empty corners, Black and White each enclose a corner from the 3-4 point with 5 and 6. Next, Black doesn't play an enclosing move from the star point at A, but instead takes a big side point. A is not bad, but an enclosing move from a star point usually isn't the most urgent thing on the board. One wants to play the big side star regions instead.

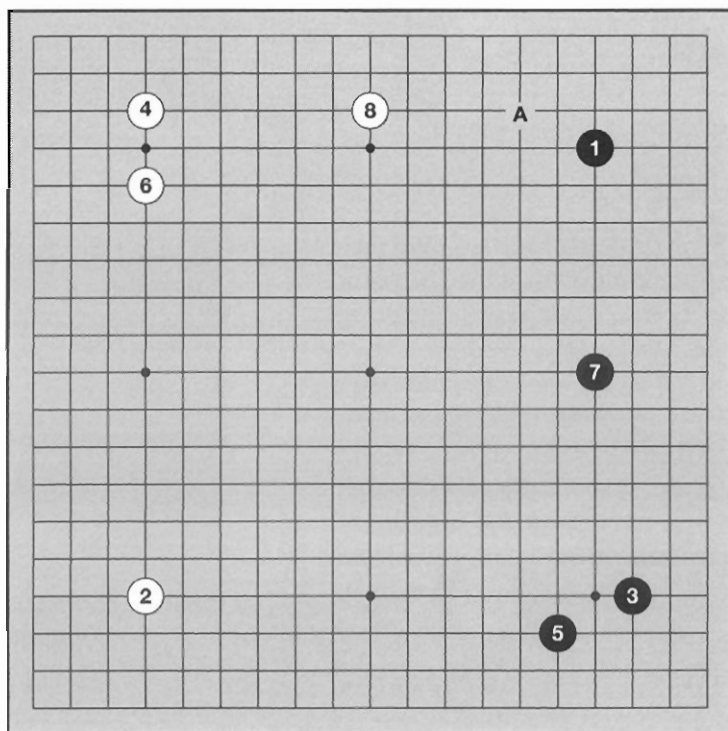


Diagram 16

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 17. From the 3-5 point, it's common to enclose the corner at the 3-4 point. This result is the same as playing the enclosure from a 3-4 point.

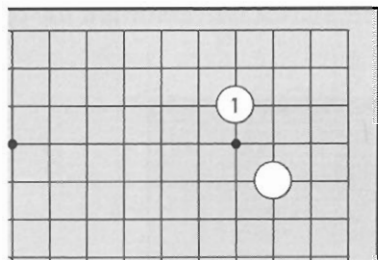


Diagram 17

Diagram 18. The 4-5 point is similar to the 3-5 point. The move at 1 transposes this position to a one-point enclosure from the 3-4 point.

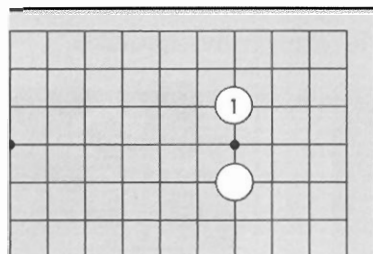


Diagram 18

The 5-3 or the 5-4 point is often played by experienced players who hope that their opponents are too timid to approach the corner “from the inside”. The idea is that they hope to secure a big corner with just one move, because their opponents never approach. Don't be intimidated – that is like giving your opponent an extra move.

Diagram 19. If your opponent has occupied the 3-5 point, playing the 3-4 point at 1 is usual.

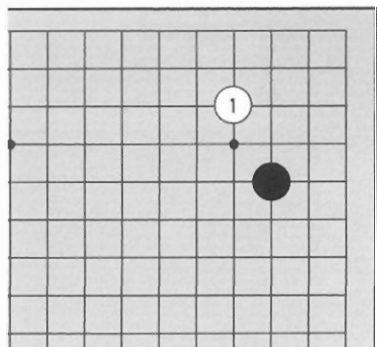


Diagram 19

Diagram 20. The 3-4 point at White 1 is also standard when the stone is on the 4-5 point.

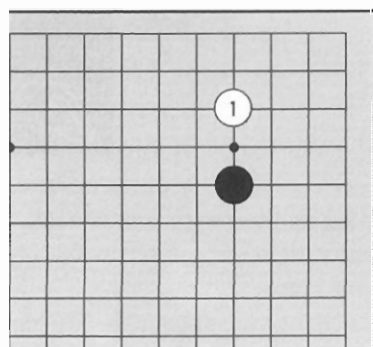


Diagram 20

Opening Guides

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 21. Here, White didn't enclose the corner but played at 1 instead. It's always possible to decide not to follow the order that opening theory suggests, for example as White does here. But when you do you should be pursuing a definite special strategy, and you shouldn't skip more than one opening step. For example, you could omit playing in an empty corner to approach your opponent's 3-4 point, but it's probably better not to skip playing there again in order to play a side star point. Here Black moves toward the corner at 2, with the knight's approach.

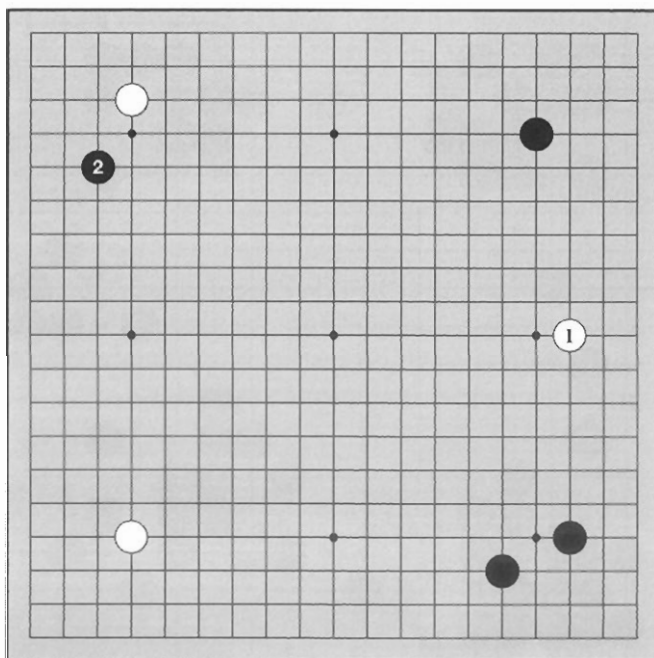


Diagram 21

Diagram 22. There are three other approaches, at A, B, and C. A is a one-point approach. This is just as popular as the knight's approach. The large knight's approach at B is possible, but not used very often. C is the two-point approach. This is as rare as the large knight's approach.

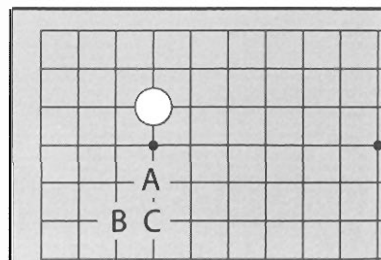


Diagram 22

2. ENCLOSE OR APPROACH “UNBALANCED” CORNERS

Diagram 23. Here's another example in which Black chooses neither to approach White's unbalanced corner right away nor to enclose his own unbalanced corner, but plays at 1 instead. This is known as the “Chinese opening,” since it was first played by an amateur Chinese player (sometimes 1 is played one line higher on the fourth line; then it is called the “High Chinese”). When this move was first played, it was ridiculed as being unsound Go theory. Soon, though, enough players began to recognize its tremendous speed: it combines an enclosure with a large side point, and, if White attempts to approach, the side point backs up the overly wide corner enclosure almost like a giant pincer. This opening became extremely popular, especially in the nineteen-eighties, and many people still use it today.

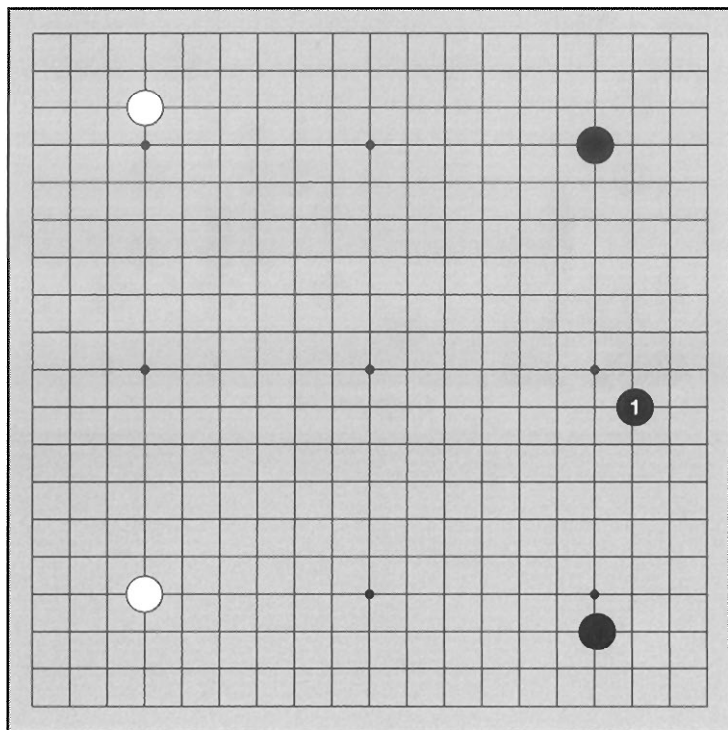


Diagram 23

3. AFTER THE CORNERS, PLAY ON THE SIDES

Diagram 24. After the corners, the big opening points are moves like 1 and 2, in the side star regions. Whoever takes more of these big points tends to have the upper hand in the opening.

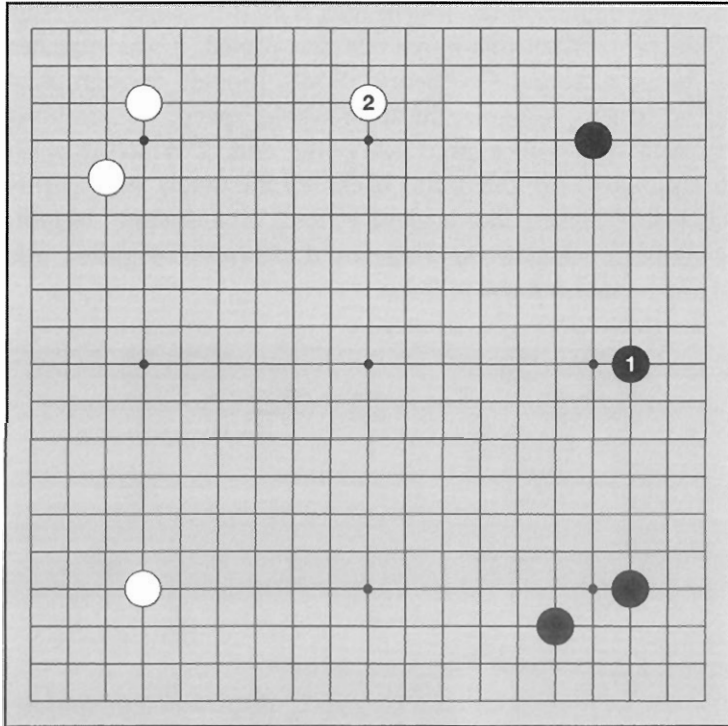


Diagram 24

3. AFTER THE CORNERS, PLAY ON THE SIDES

Diagram 25. Sometimes you might approach a star point in preparation for taking one of the sides. For example, in this case there are no unbalanced corners, so next Black would like to take a big point on the side. He can play at 5 first, and after White responds at 6, then Black can grab the large side point at 7. Of course Black could just have played 7 first, but the approach at 5 is a natural follow-up to 7 and can be played first.

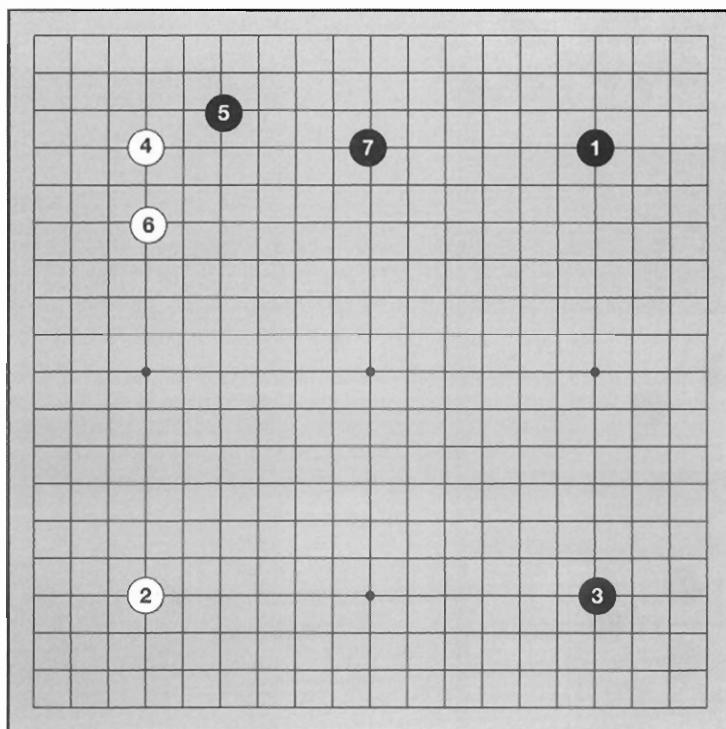


Diagram 25

Opening Guides

3. AFTER THE CORNERS, PLAY ON THE SIDES

Diagram 26. Playing here first doesn't mean the whole side will automatically become your territory. It's still possible to invade – in the lower right at White 2, for example. But Black can also benefit by attacking: a move like 3 attacks while expanding the northeast. Whoever gets to the side star region first leads in the fight for that side.

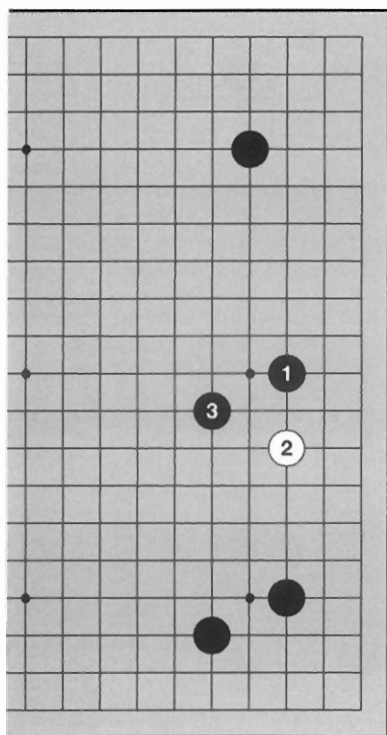


Diagram 26

Diagram 27. When you're taking the big points, moves like Black 1 on the fourth line or at A on the third line are also possible. The third line is more territorial and the fourth line is more suited to developing influence the center.

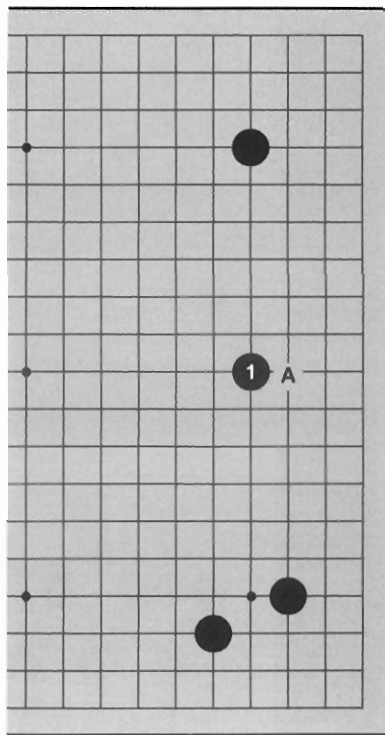


Diagram 27

3. AFTER THE CORNERS, PLAY ON THE SIDES

Diagram 28. Usually, one plays on the side star point or one line below it, but for a little extra oomph, Black may choose to go one line further as he does here. This move is faster and covers more ground, but has a more tenuous relationship to his corner. If Black is sure he has good backup, going farther is a good idea.

Diagram 29. By the same rationale, White can go a little farther here as well. (In both this case and in the previous diagram, a move on the fourth line is possible.)

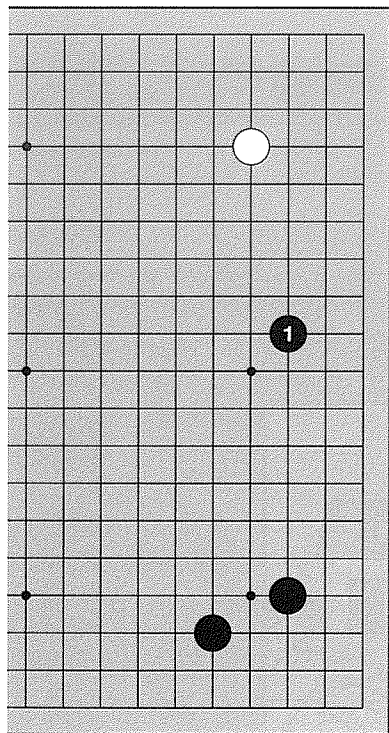


Diagram 28

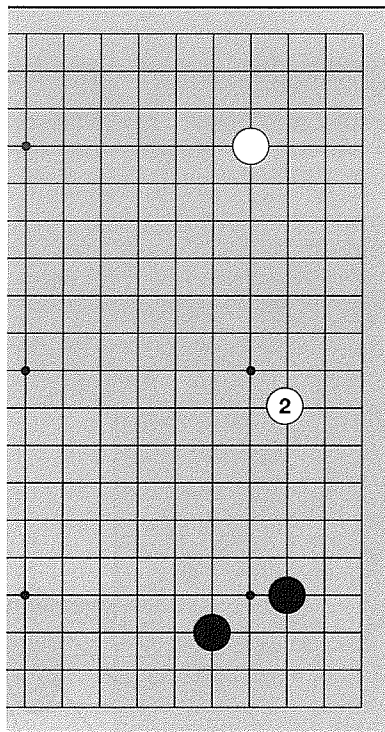


Diagram 29

4. EXTENSIONS LOOKING TOWARDS INVASIONS

In the opening, a side extension looking towards an invasion is bigger than it appears. Don't just look for the emptiest-looking side.

Diagram 30. The extension at 1 is very big. It enlarges Black's territory, and has a good follow-up in the invasion at A. Black 1 may look small compared to moves at B or C, but really it's of comparable size.

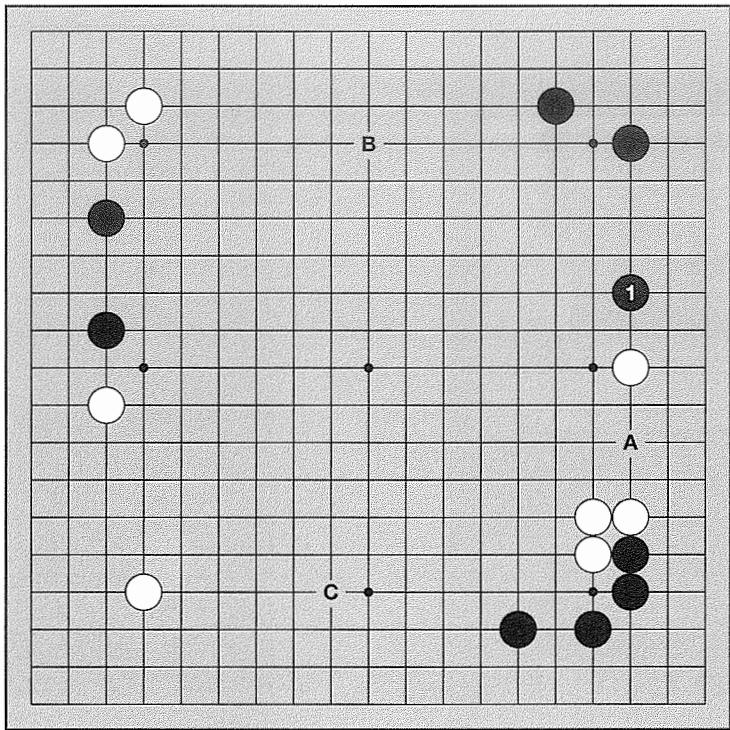


Diagram 30

4. EXTENSIONS LOOKING TOWARDS INVASIONS

Diagram 31. Black 1 is also big, but then White gets to play at 2, preventing Black's expansion while enlarging White's area on the east side.

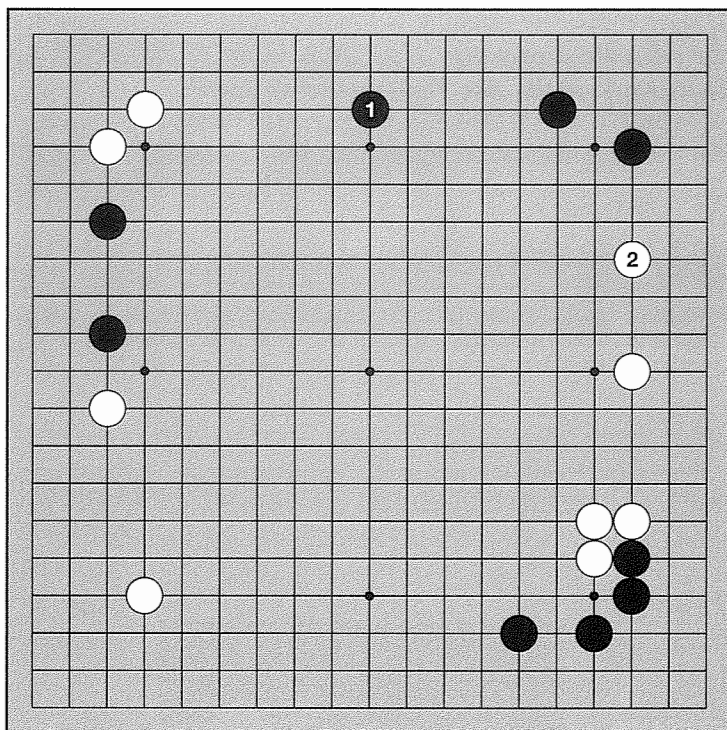
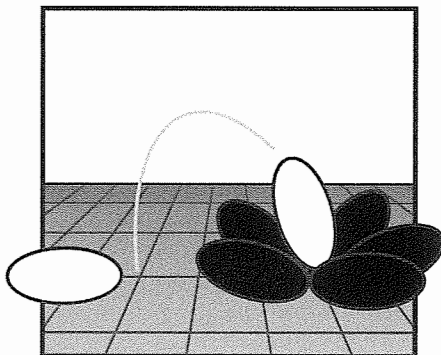


Diagram 31



Opening Guides

5. ENLARGE AND PROTECT (OR REDUCE AND INVADE)

After the side extensions, moves that jump toward the center, enlarging and defending territorial frameworks, are big.

Diagram 32. The opening is basically over after corners and the sides are spoken for. Now Black wants to enlarge the big framework on the east. How should he start?

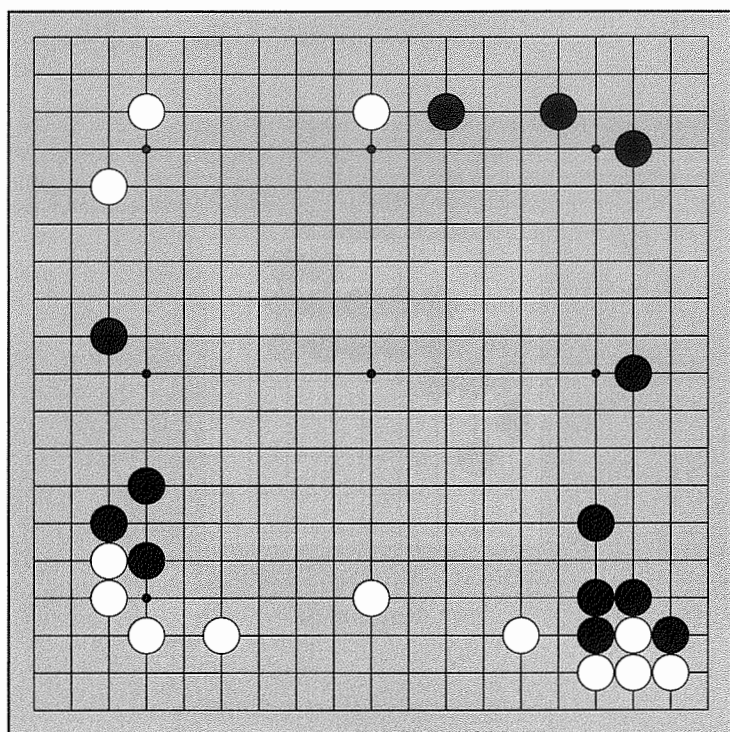


Diagram 32

5. ENLARGE AND PROTECT (OR REDUCE AND INVADE)

Diagram 33. A one-point jump towards the center at 1 is good. Black's area is getting pretty expansive. If White also makes a one-point jump at 2, enlarging her northwest area, Black does the same for the northeast at 3.

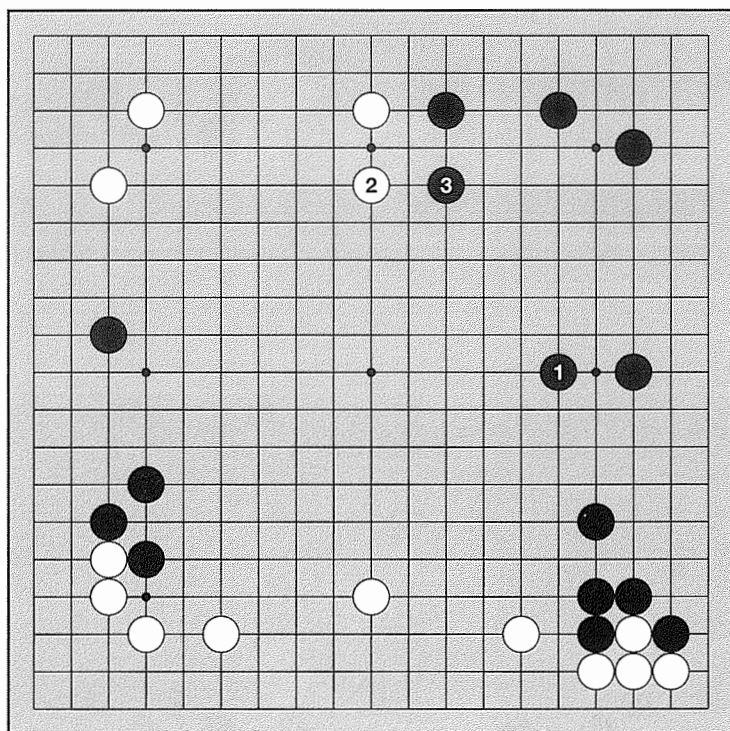


Diagram 33

5. ENLARGE AND PROTECT (OR REDUCE & INVADE)

Diagram 34. The one-point jump is also used to prevent invasions. When Black plays the marked stone, looking to invade next at A, White jumps at 1. This secures the area by preventing Black from making a successful invasion.

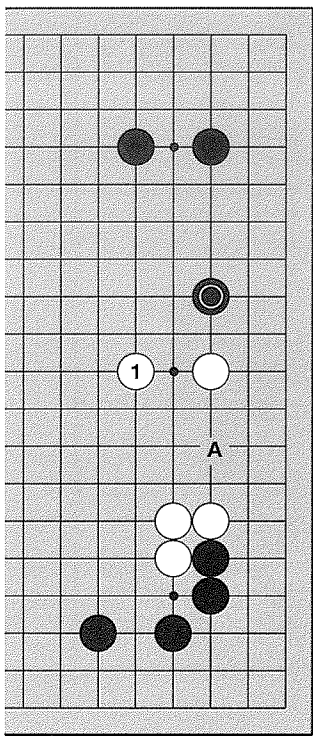


Diagram 34

Diagram 35. In this shape also, Black 1 is good for preventing White from invading at A. As an added bonus the one-point jump also develops the center, creating influence.

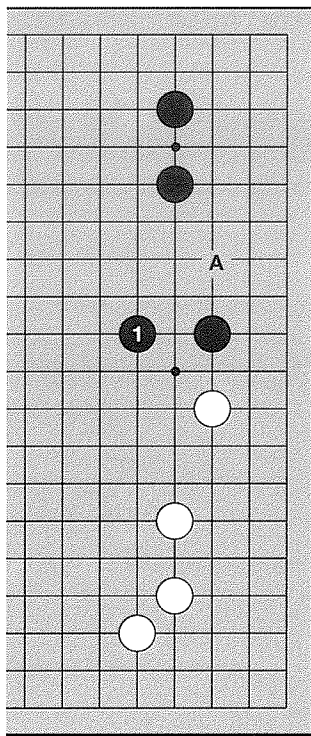


Diagram 35

6. BALANCE: INFLUENCE VS. PROFIT

Opening moves are usually played on the third and fourth lines – since in most cases, the second line is too low and the fifth line is usually too high to surround territory efficiently. The third line is called the territory line, and the fourth line is called the power line. It's good to balance both in the opening.

Diagram 36. Black plays at 1 on the fourth line. When White plays at 2, it's difficult for Black to make territory because White can slide in at A. However, Black's move will have an effect on future fighting.

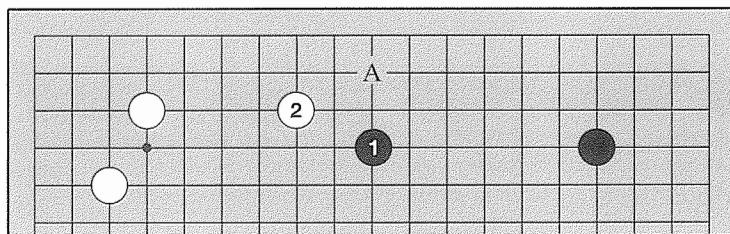


Diagram 36

Diagram 37. A move at 1 goes a long way toward creating territory in the north. It's easier to make territory with a stone on the third line. On the other hand, White can easily reduce Black's territory with the simple cap at 2.

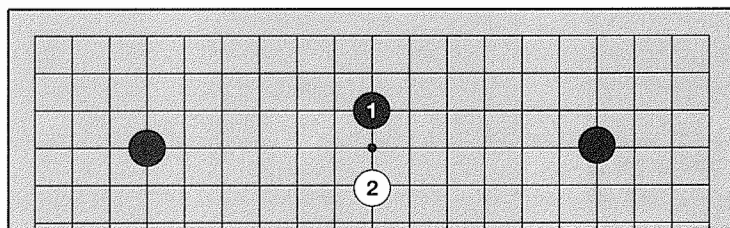


Diagram 37

“Balancing” the third and fourth lines doesn’t mean simply playing half of your moves on the third line and half on the fourth line. It’s a bit more subtle than that. If a section of your territory is marked out mainly by fourth-line stones, your opponent will immediately consider invading it – since if you end up solidifying fourth-line territory, it will be too large for him to bear. If your territory’s made on the third line, though, he’ll generally think of reducing, since third-line territory usually can’t grow very big, and reducing it is easy. Keeping this in mind, when you’re “balancing” the third and the fourth lines, you’ll sometimes want to have more stones on the third line and other times you’ll want more on the fourth line – all depending on your overall opening strategy.

Opening Guides

6. BALANCE: INFLUENCE VS. PROFIT

Diagram 38. Black would like to strengthen his wide extension on the west side. Where should he play?

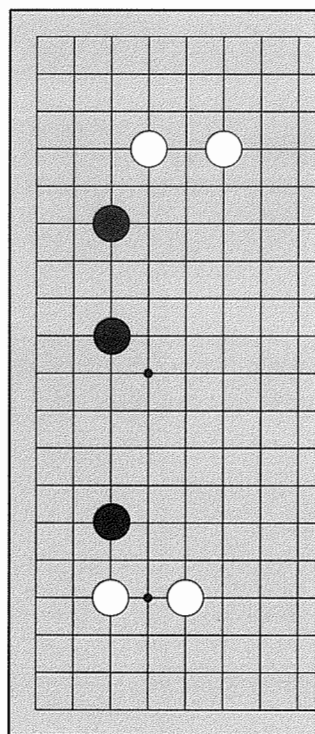


Diagram 38

Diagram 39. If Black plays on the third line at 1, then all of his stones in the area are on the third line. This isn't a good balance.

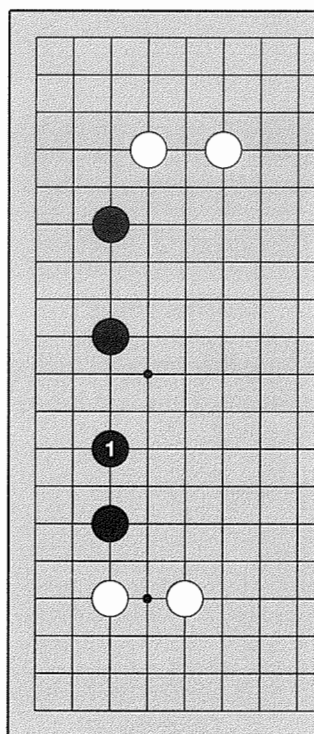


Diagram 39

Diagram 40. Black 1 here, raising his position, is a good combination of the third and fourth lines.

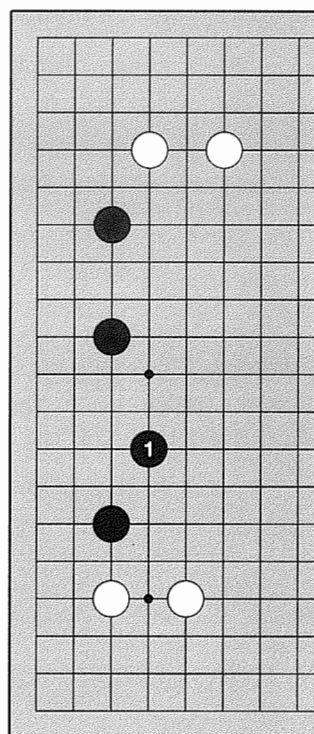
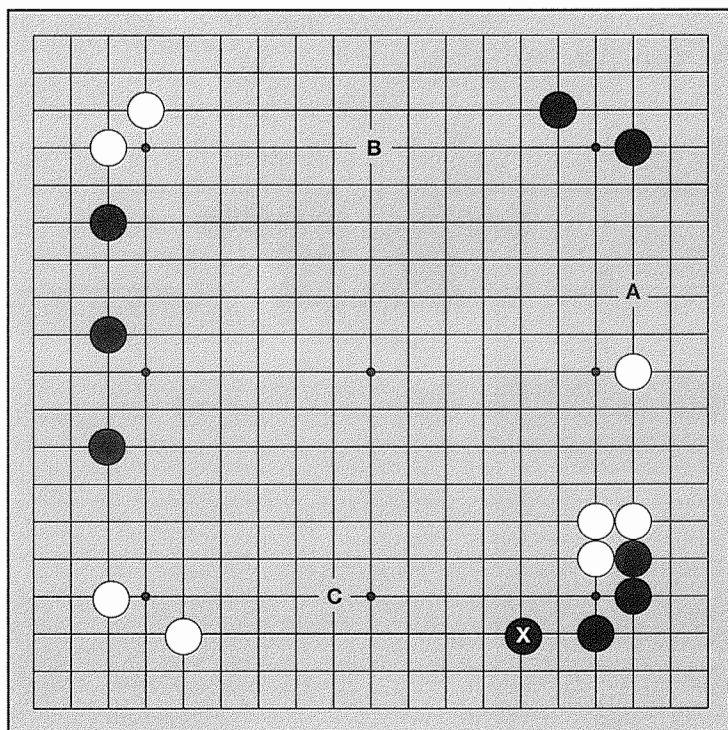


Diagram 40

EXTRA FOR EXPERTS



Take a look at the position in the southeast corner. This pattern was invented by the great Go Seigen early in the 20th century. At the time, people said the position was bad for Black because of Black's overemphasis on the third line on the south side; before, Black had usually tried to raise his position by playing the marked stone on the fourth line. Nowadays we recognize that Black has made a nice, solid chunk of territory in the corner, so we don't worry about his low profile. This position does have one serious implication, though: the south side is now what I call "dead for development." It's the smallest side on the board, because Black's low stone has already limited how much territory he can effectively develop here.

Of the three choices of follow-up, Black would most like to play A. If that's not possible, he can substitute B or, at worst, C.

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Which side should you play on? Here are some things to consider: the splitting play, the double wing, the open edge, and backup.

Diagram 41. White wants to prevent Black from staking a claim to a huge area on the side. How?

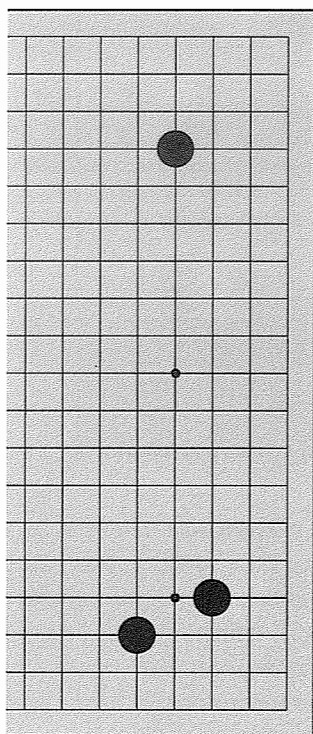


Diagram 41

Diagram 42. A move at 1 near the secured corner is not a great idea, since it can be severely attacked at Black 2.

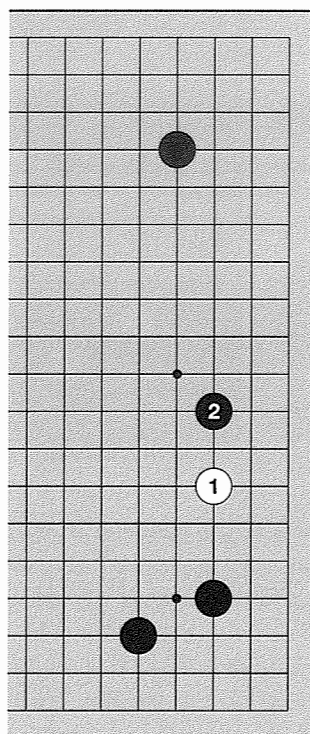


Diagram 42

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Diagram 43. Getting close to the top corner at 1 allows Black to play the big point while attacking at 2.

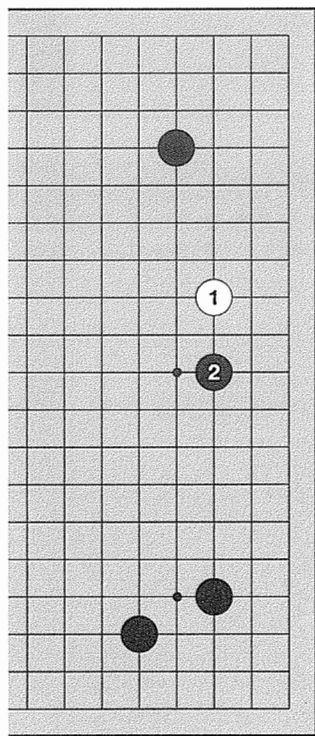


Diagram 43

Diagram 44. The splitting play at 1, right in the middle, is good in this case. If Black 2, White makes a base at 3. If Black plays on the other side at A instead, White can play at B.

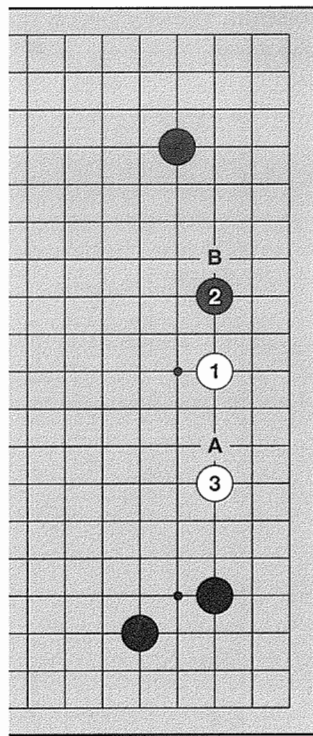


Diagram 44

The successful splitting play is usually going to be on the third line. Why? Remember that the third line is the line of territory. This also means it's the line where it's easiest to make a base. You'll want enough room on either side of your splitting play so that you can make a base if your opponent approaches.

Opening Guides

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Try to prevent your opponent from making a “double wing”, and make one yourself if you can.

Diagram 45. Black’s two marked stones are forming a “wing.” And if Black plays one more stone around the marked point on the south side, he will have formed a double wing. The double wing is an ideal territory-making formation, because if your opponent plays on one side, the other side is likely to become solid territory.

In this position, White’s largest move is quickly to play a move on the south side to prevent the second wing.

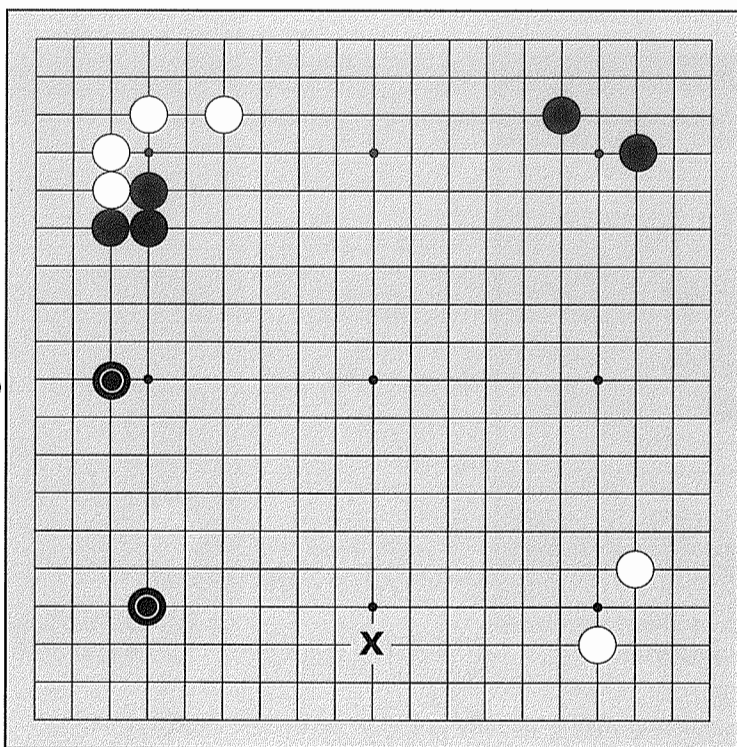


Diagram 45

The “joint” of a double-wing formation doesn’t have to be a star point; sometimes it’s a corner enclosure. Remember that geometrically speaking you’ll want to build shapes with volume or “more than one side to them,” rather than flat shapes, since it’s easiest to make territory this way. Having too many stones on one side – particularly on the third line – is a recipe for coming up short on territory.

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Diagram 46. Which side is more valuable here, the south or the east? Often when deciding which side is more valuable to play, you should ask yourself, “On which side does territory stand to be made?” Here, the south side has an open edge. It will be hard for White to make territory on this side, because she’ll have to close off the bottom as well as make an extension. It’s much more likely that White will make territory on the east side, where the edge is effectively closed. So that’s the side Black and White would prefer to play.

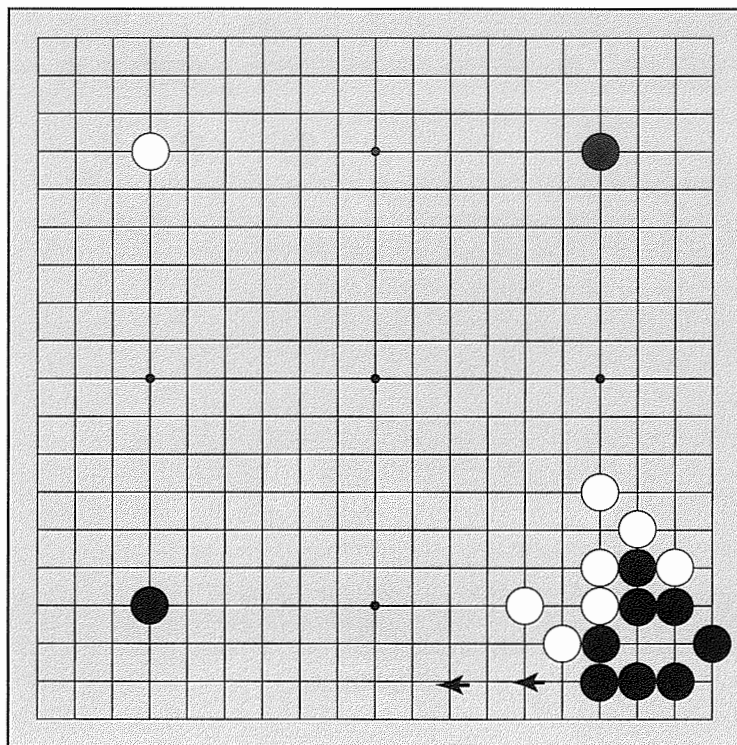


Diagram 46

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Generally, your preference should be to make it easy on yourself if you can – that is, play on the side where you have backup.

Diagram 47. Here, jumping into your opponent's sphere of influence would mean an uphill battle that you could easily have avoided. A Black play at A is a much easier way to stay ahead than to try to jump into White's area at B.

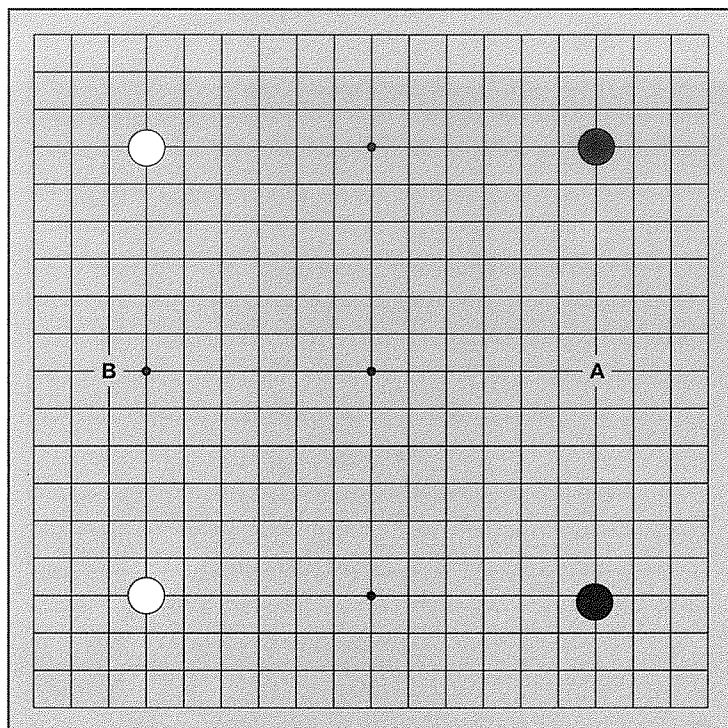


Diagram 47

7. FIND YOUR GOOD SIDE

Diagram 48. By the same logic, it's much easier for Black to approach at A here – using his star point as backup and planning next to follow up by playing the north side star point – than to approach from inside White's sphere of influence at B.

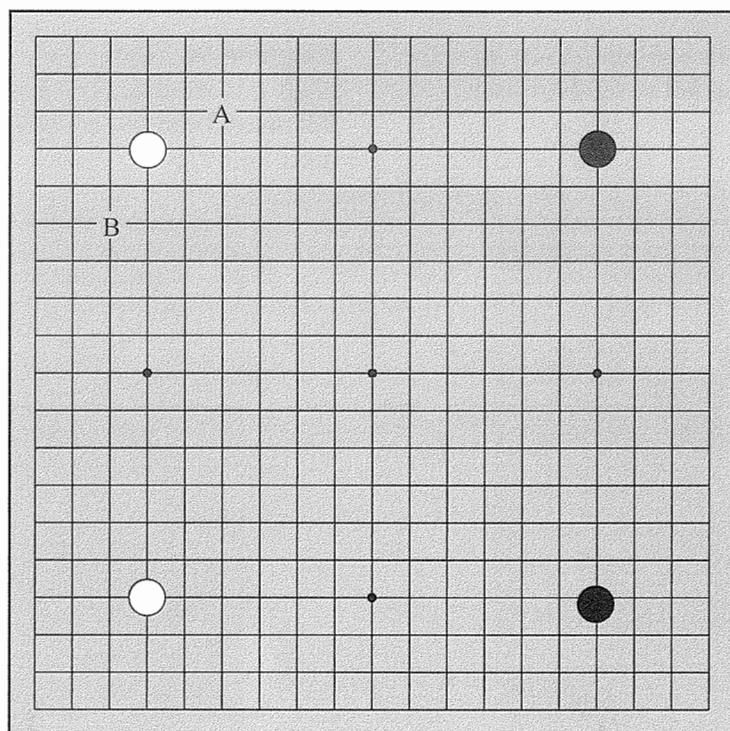


Diagram 48

8. MAKE A BASE

It's unwise to form a group without a base. You may be tempted to make a big play instead of bothering with the grunt work of laying a foundation. But it's crucial to make a base for any stones that you plan to keep – otherwise, as your opponent attacks your baseless group, he can make a big move with every turn, easily gaining more than you made with your one big move. That's why there's a Go saying: "Urgent before big."

Diagram 49. Black shouldn't just leave the stone on the top left to fend for itself.

Diagram 50. When White attacks at 1, Black is in trouble. Black jumps at 2, White follows at 3 and Black is still in trouble. It's most important to make a base.

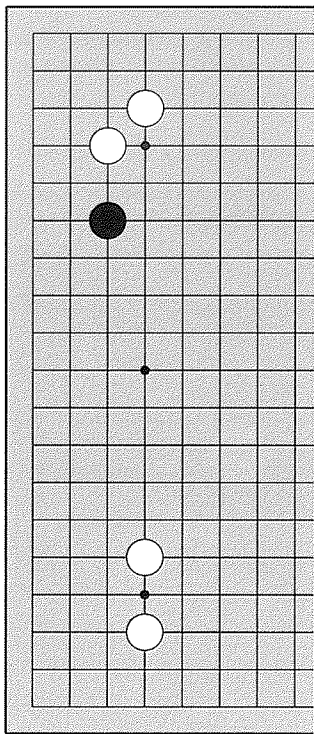


Diagram 49

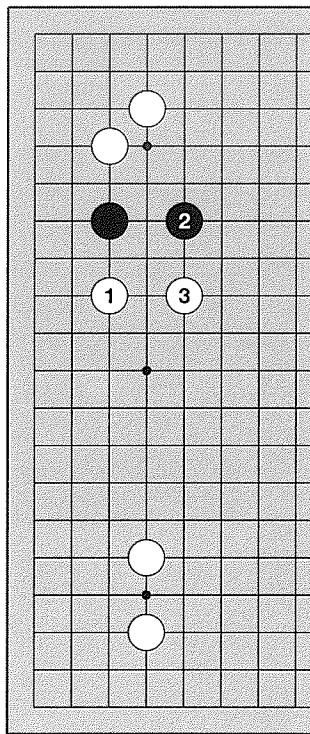


Diagram 50

Diagram 51. Black needs to make a two-point extension to prevent an attack. Black 1, forming a base, makes Black safe for now. When there is one stone, a two-point extension is ideal. If there are two stones in a row (a two-story construction), then a three-point extension is ideal.

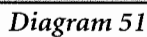


Diagram 52

Opening Guides

8. MAKE A BASE

Diagram 53. If Black doesn't play in this area, a White move at 1 is severe. Black's stones are without a base and he'll pay a big price as he gets chased around.

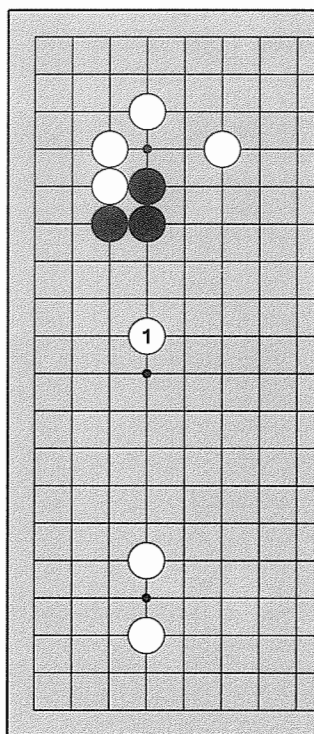


Diagram 53

Diagram 54. The three stones on the top left actually make a two-story shape. Therefore a three-point extension at 1 is ideal. You may remember the proverb from previous volumes: "If one, jump two; if two, jump three."

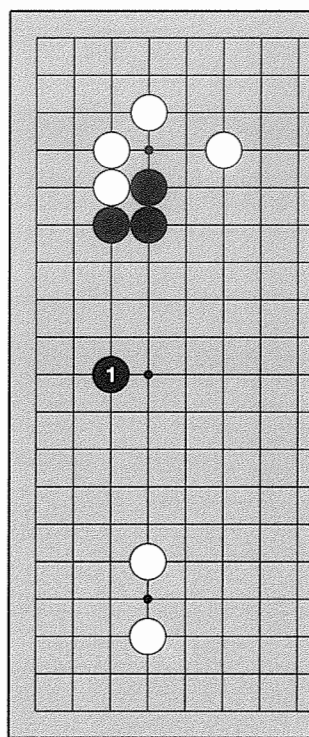
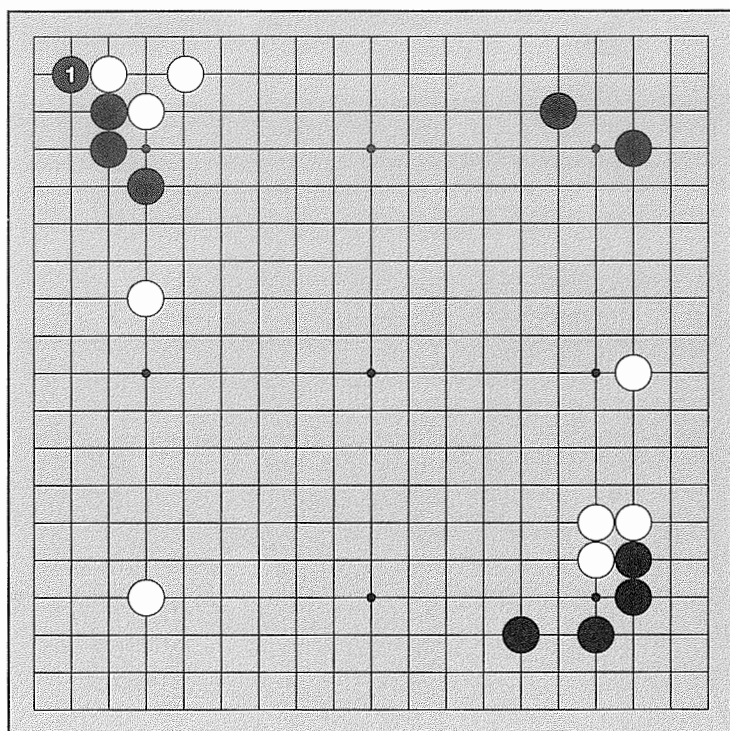


Diagram 54

EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

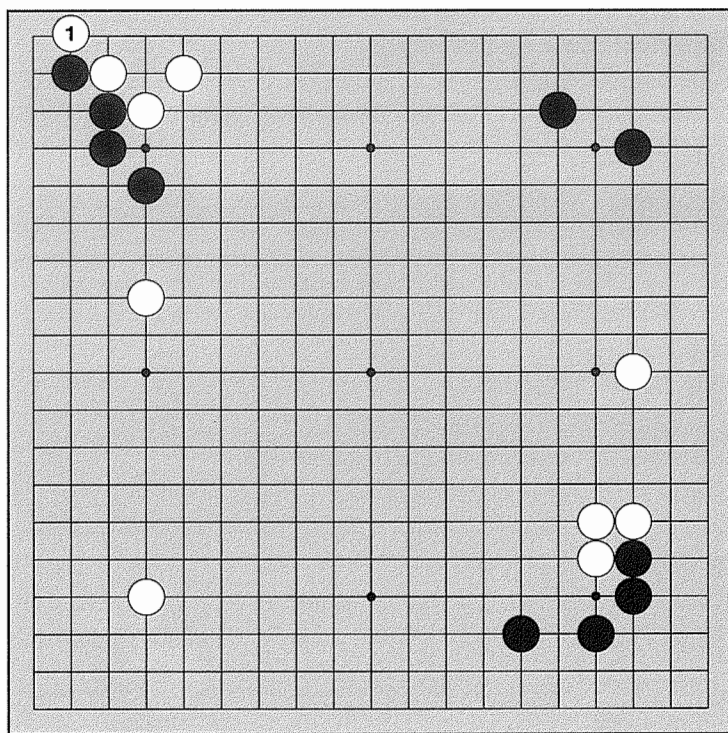
If you're going through an exercise book with a lot of full-board opening problems, you can score some easy points if you remember this key principle: if you can, make or break a base. And if there's a move that involves the bases of two groups, you don't even have to look at the rest of the board. In this diagram, if Black plays at 1, what do you think is the most important move on the board?



Opening Guides

EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

The most important move is for White to play at 1 – an interesting example of the largest opening move's being on the first line. This move both keeps Black from securing his base, and helps White with her own.



9. STAY AWAY FROM STRENGTH

There is a saying: “Play away from strength.” If you play near your opponent’s strength, there’s a chance that your stones will get hurt.

Diagram 55. White has influence in the west. Black wants to make an extension in the north. Where should he play?

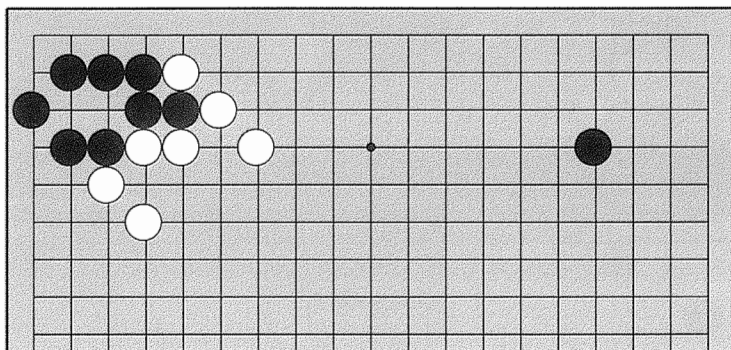


Diagram 55

Diagram 56. A wide extension at Black 1, near White’s influence, is dangerous. White can invade at 2.

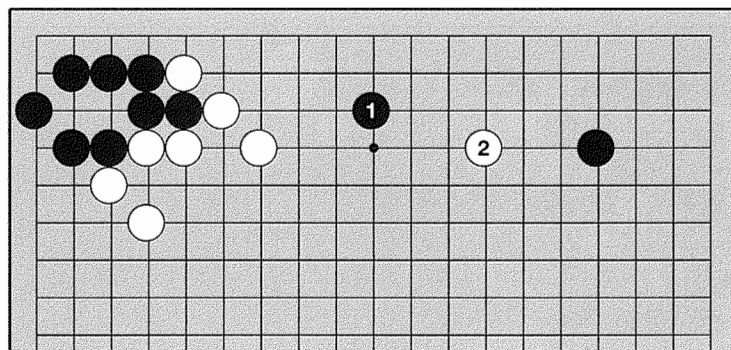


Diagram 56

Opening Guides

9. STAY AWAY FROM STRENGTH

Diagram 57. A large knight's move is as far as one can go and still be safe.

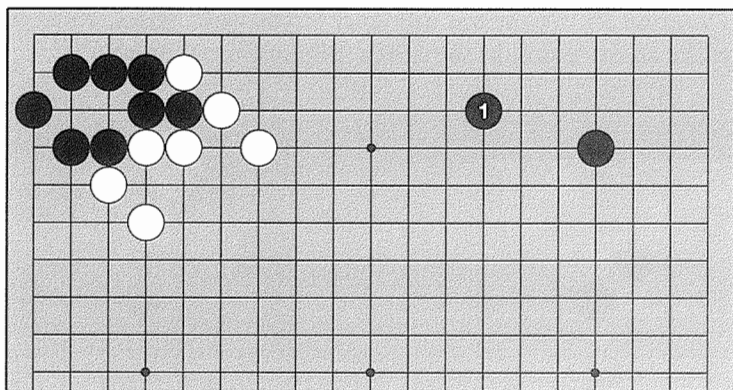


Diagram 57

Diagram 58. On the other hand, if White wants to play in this area, where's a good move?

The saying also works the other way: one should also play away from one's own strength. An extension at 1 in this case is too close.

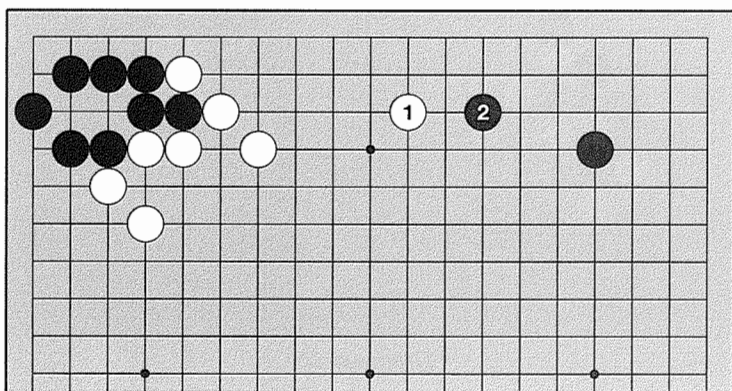


Diagram 58

9. STAY AWAY FROM STRENGTH

Diagram 59. White should approach at 1. When Black responds at 2, White plays 3. Because of White's strength in the west, Black can't easily invade this area.

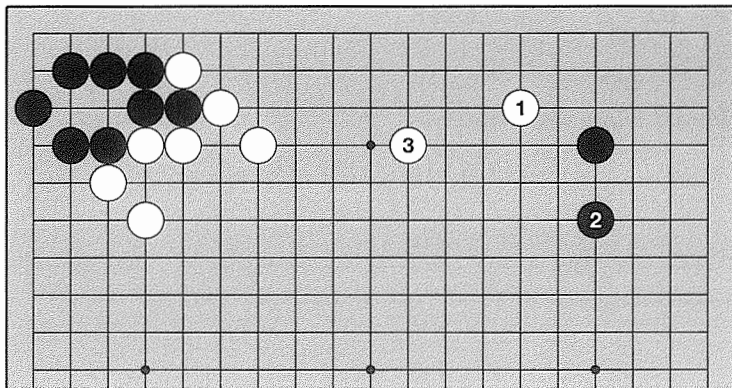
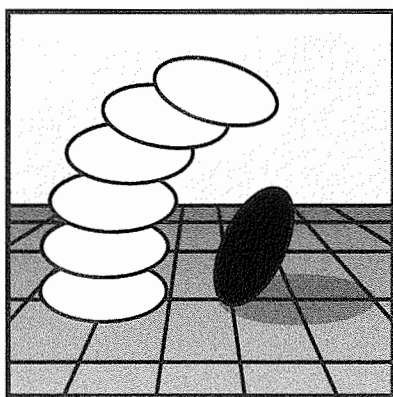


Diagram 59

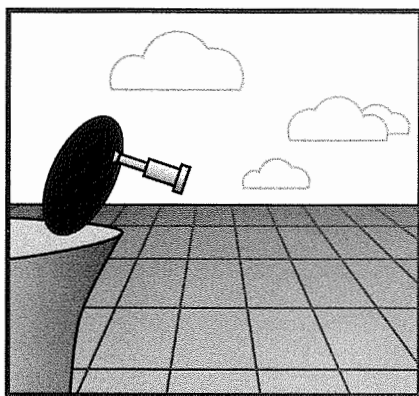


Opening: Test Yourself

HERE ARE 10 QUESTIONS ON THE OPENING. TRY TO SOLVE EACH PROBLEM BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE.

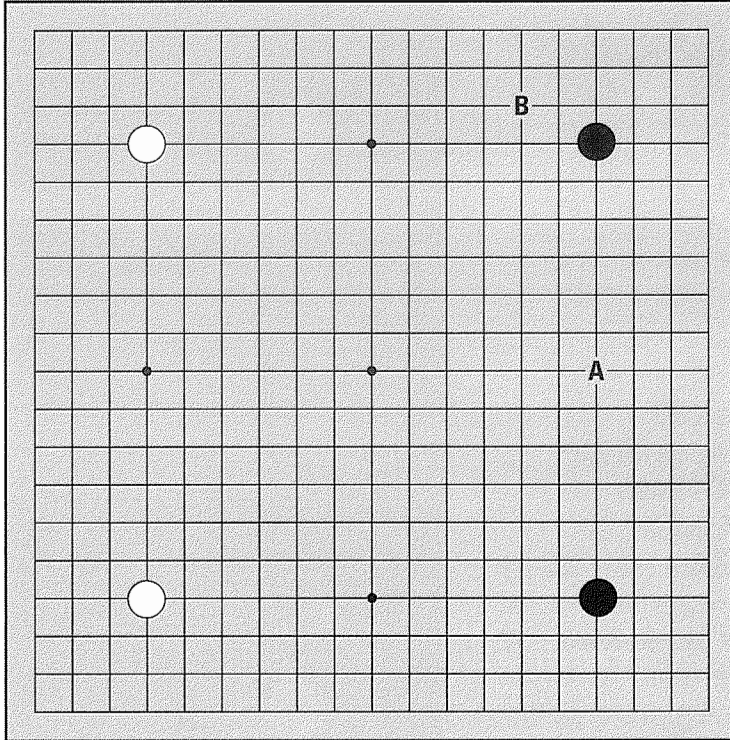
SCORING

- 9 – 10: EXCELLENT
7 – 8: GOOD
5 – 6: AVERAGE
1 – 4: REVIEW THIS CHAPTER



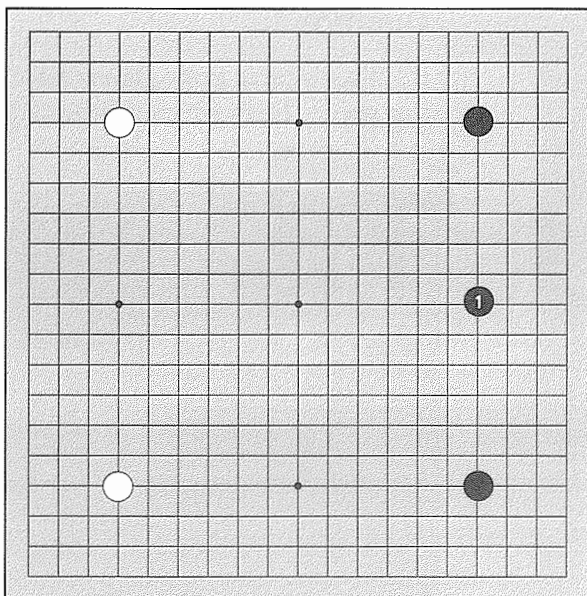
QUESTION 1:

It's Black's turn. Both players have taken two corners at the star points. Next, which is better, A or B?

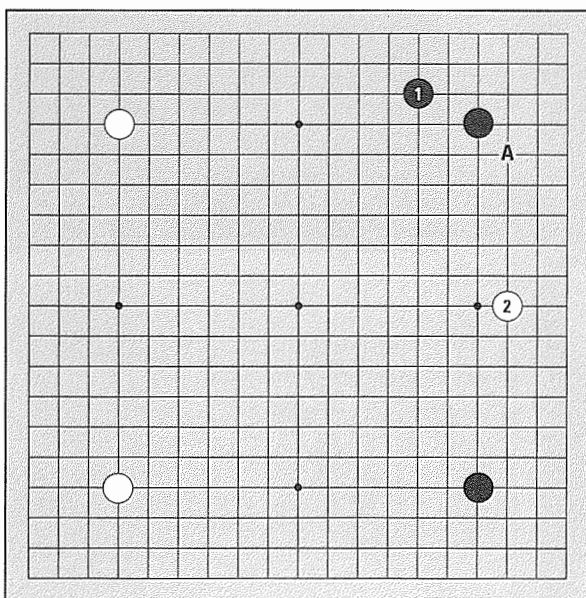


CORRECT:

After taking the corners and approaching or enclosing unbalanced corners, the side star regions are next. Black 1 here is a good play. This opening is called the Three Straight Star Opening.

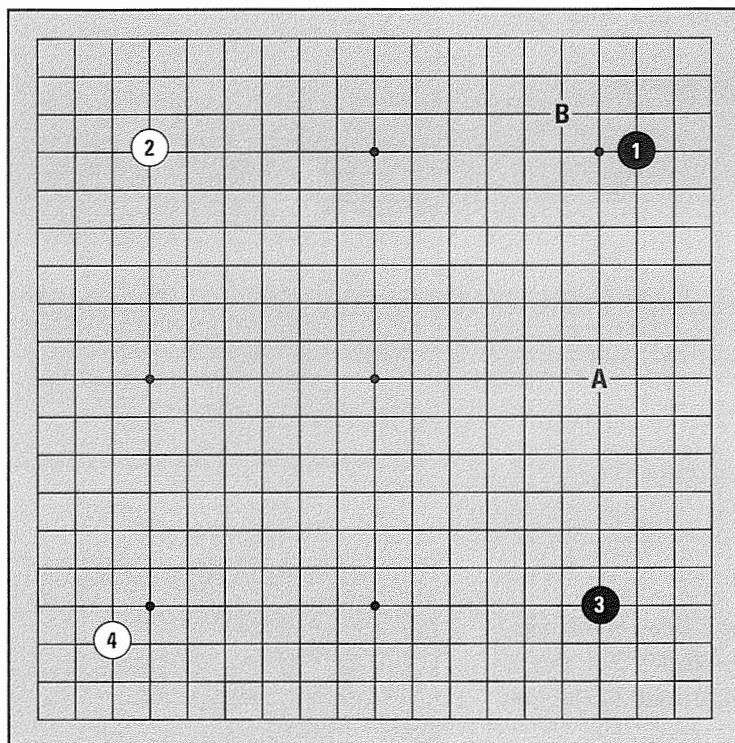
**NOT URGENT:**

Trying to enclose the corner from the star point with Black 1 here isn't as good. Black still needs another play at A to secure the corner. In the opening, one shouldn't play too many stones in one area, so Black shouldn't rush to enclose the corner from a star point. White 2 here is a good splitting play.



QUESTION 2:

It's Black's turn. Which is better, A or B?

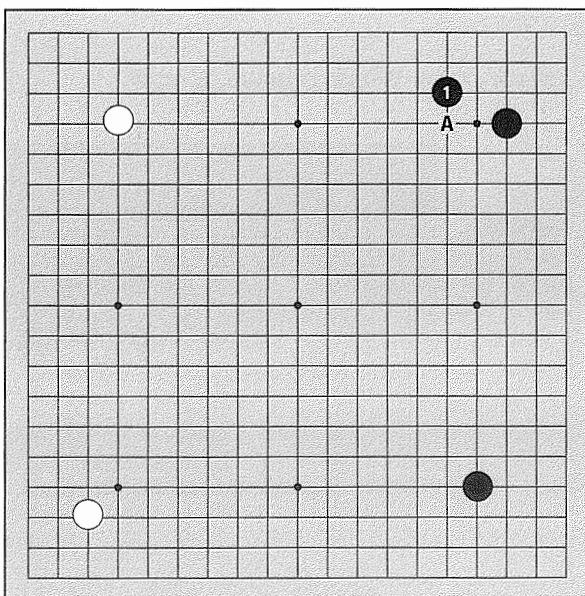


Opening: Test Yourself

CORRECT:

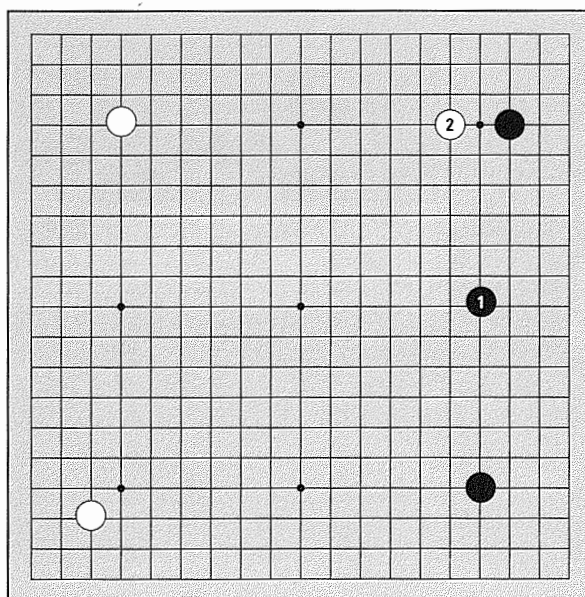
There's an unbalanced corner here, so Black would like to enclose it before moving to the large side points.

Black at A is also good.



TOO EARLY:

If Black plays at 1 here, White easily approaches Black's 3-4 point. Black feels a bit pressed to the east side.



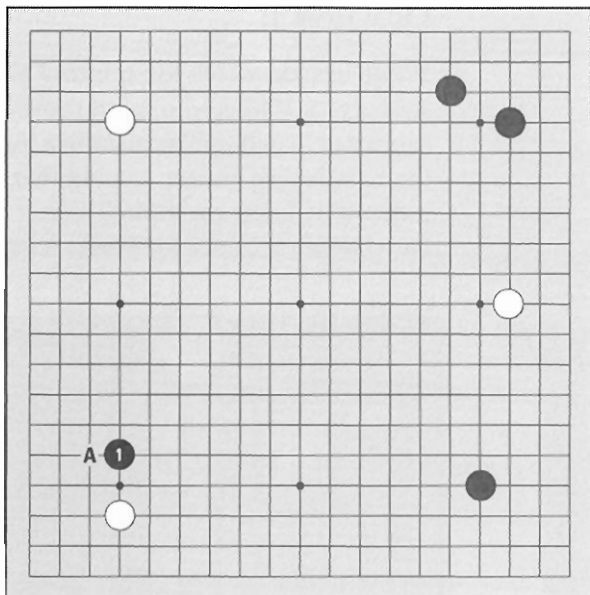
White has just made the splitting play at 1. (This is a possible strategy for White, who is one move behind in the opening and can try to “catch up” by making a big play instead of enclosing the unbalanced corner, hoping that Black’s approach is made difficult by being on White’s side.)

A 10x10 grid with the following features:

- Point A:** A small black dot at (1, 5).
- Point B:** A small black dot at (1, 1).
- Point 1:** A small black dot at (8, 5).
- Large White Circle:** Located at (2, 8).
- Large Black Circle:** Located at (8, 1).
- Other Points:**
 - Small black dot at (5, 8).
 - Small black dot at (5, 1).
 - Large black circle at (7, 9).
 - Large black circle at (9, 8).
 - Small black dot at (9, 9).

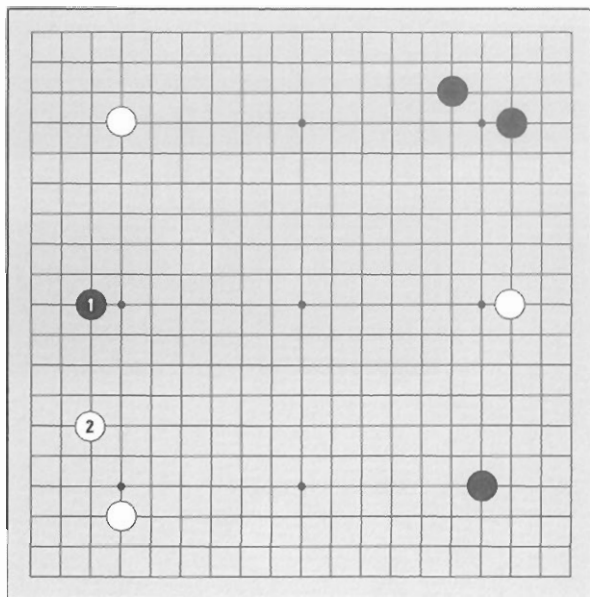
CORRECT:

White neglected to enclose the corner, so Black doesn't want to miss a chance to approach it. Black at A is also possible.

**TOO SLOW:**

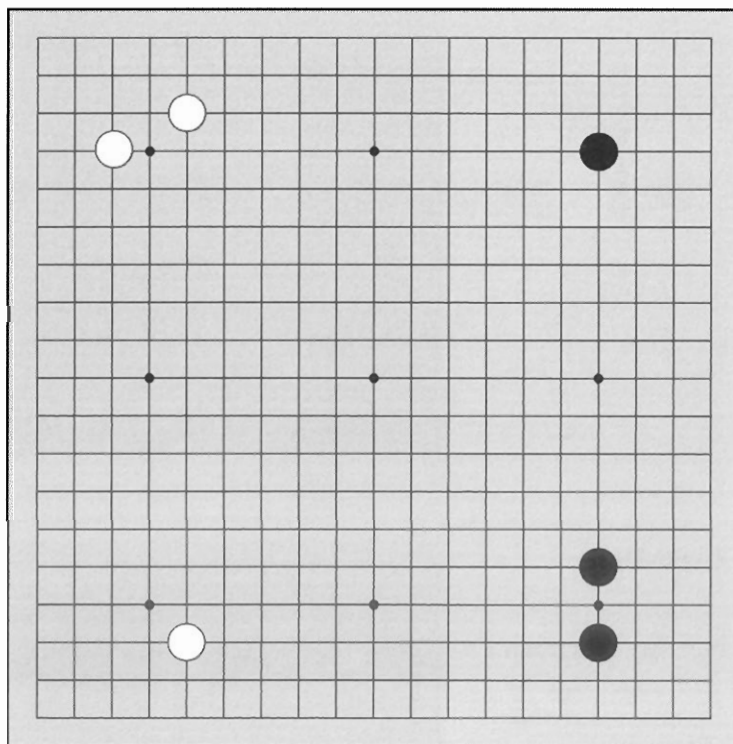
If Black makes a splitting play of his own, White can seize this opportunity to enclose the unbalanced corner. Black has allowed White to get both the corner enclosure and the splitting play, so White has made progress in catching up.

Notice the large knight's move enclosure prevents Black from making a two-point extension base in the southwest.



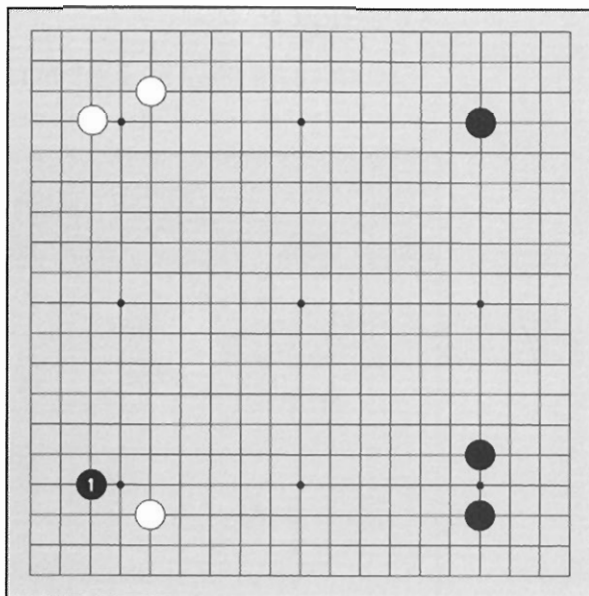
QUESTION 4:

Where's a good place for Black to play now?

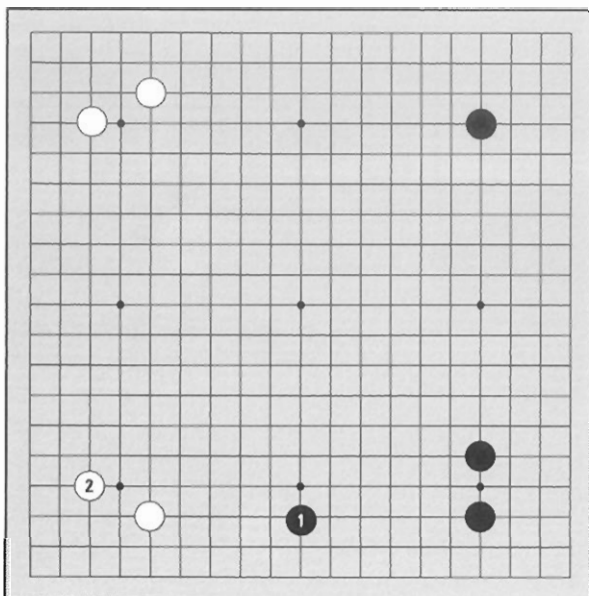


CORRECT:

Black approaches the unbalanced corner at 1.

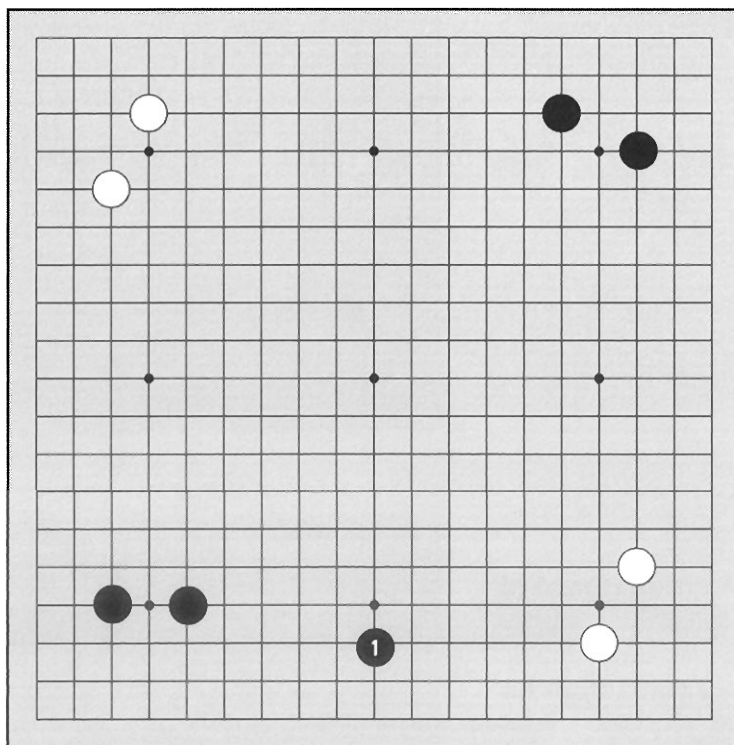
**ALLOWS TWO CORNER ENCLOSURES:**

Black 1 is a large play, but then White can take the advantage by immediately enclosing the corner at 2. You shouldn't allow your opponent to make two corner enclosures in the opening if you can help it.



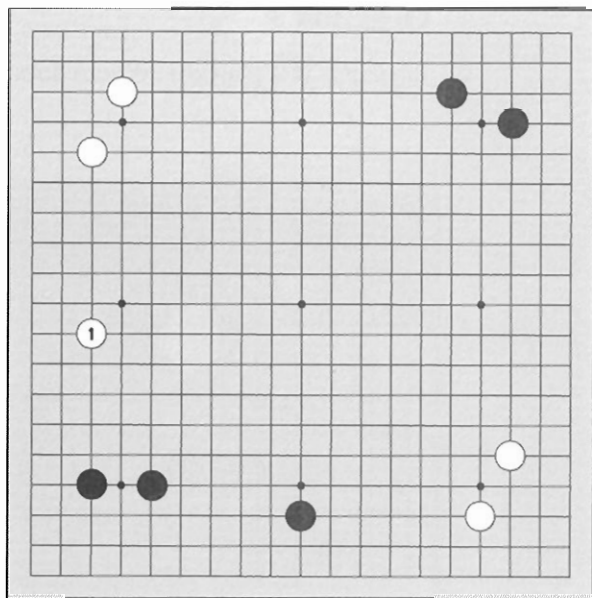
QUESTION 5:

Black has just played 1. Where does White need to play now?

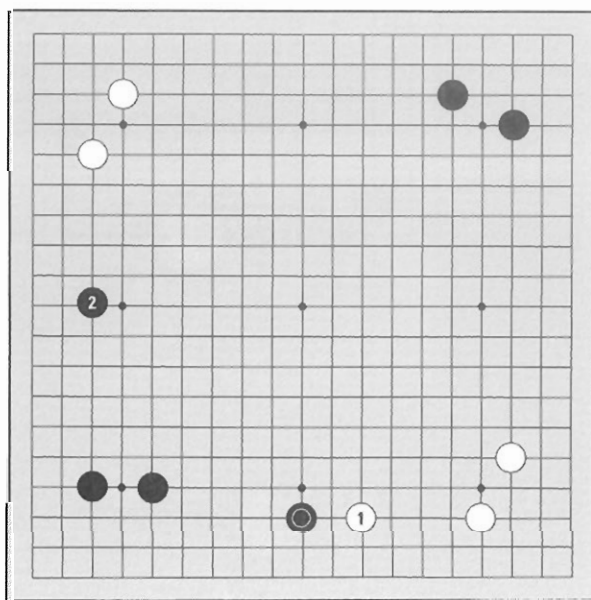


CORRECT:

White needs to prevent the double wing at 1 here. Next, Black will prevent White's double wing, and then White will prevent another double wing.

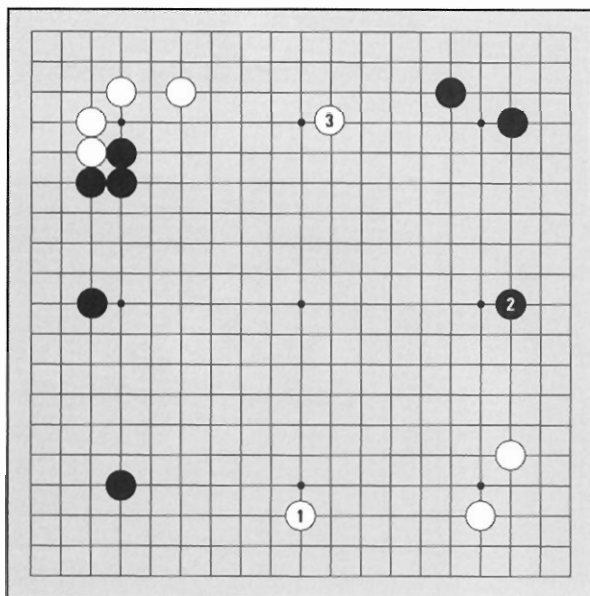
**TOO SMALL:**

Responding to Black's marked stone is still small. If White plays at 1 here, Black makes a double wing formation, an ideal shape for making territory.

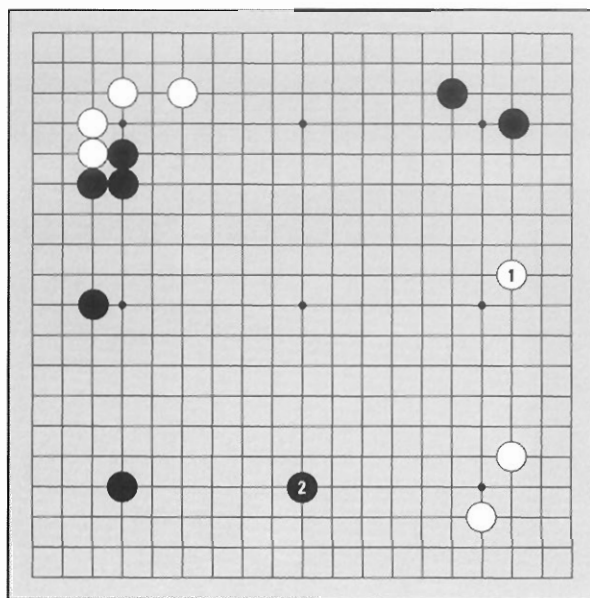


CORRECT:

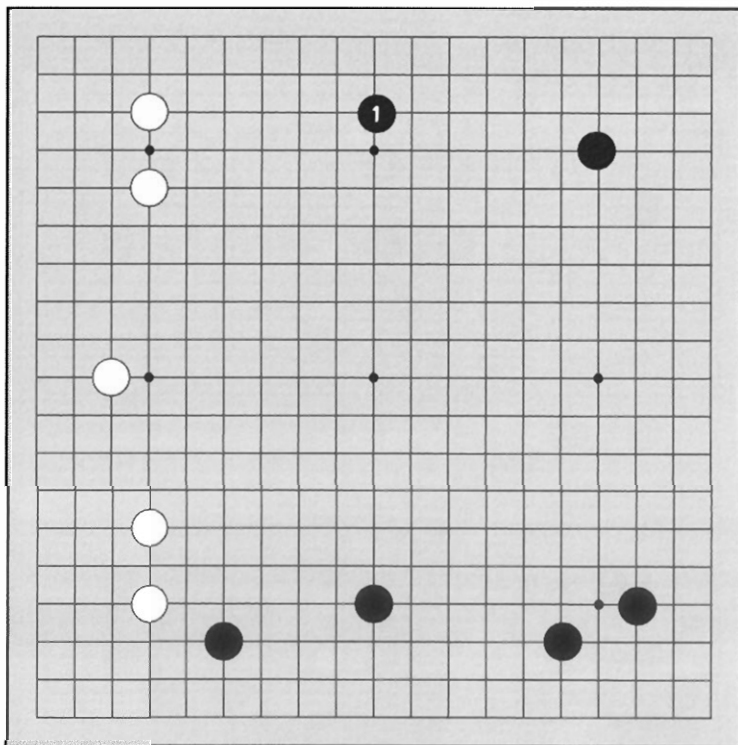
White 1 here is the biggest play. Next the natural flow of this opening would be that Black prevents White's double wing at the big point at 2, and White does the same with the last big side point at 3.

**WRONG SIDE:**

If White takes the big side point on the east side at 1, Black can make a double wing at 2.

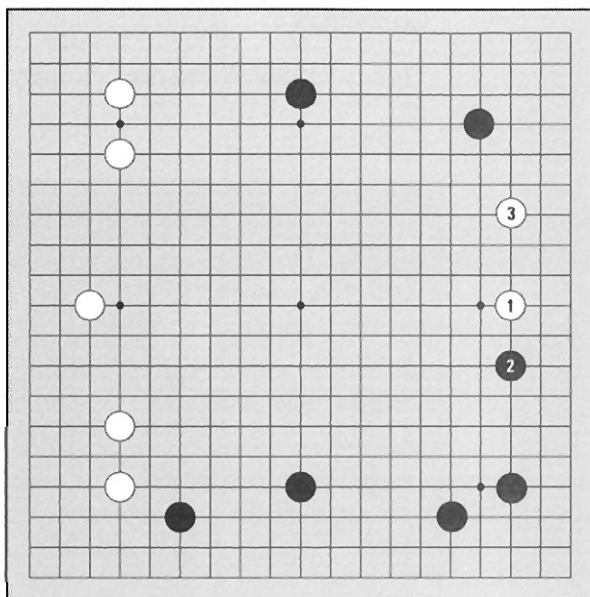


There's a place White needs to play in this opening. Where is it?



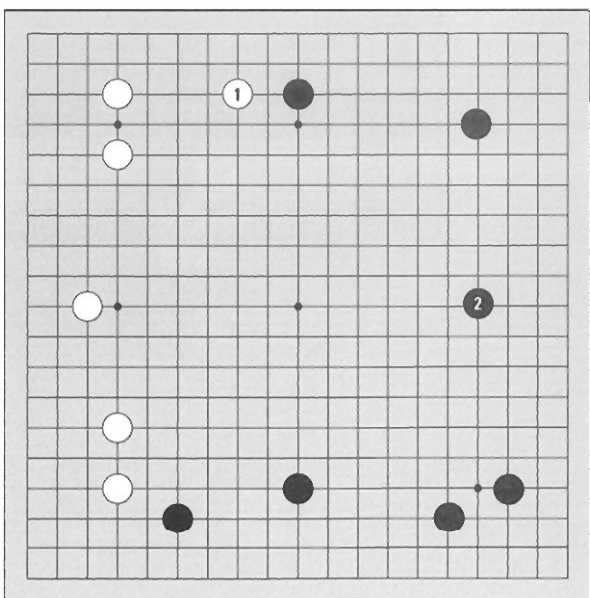
CORRECT:

White needs to make the splitting play at 1, preventing Black from making an overwhelming position with double wings in the north and south. If Black plays at 2, White makes a two point extension base at 3.

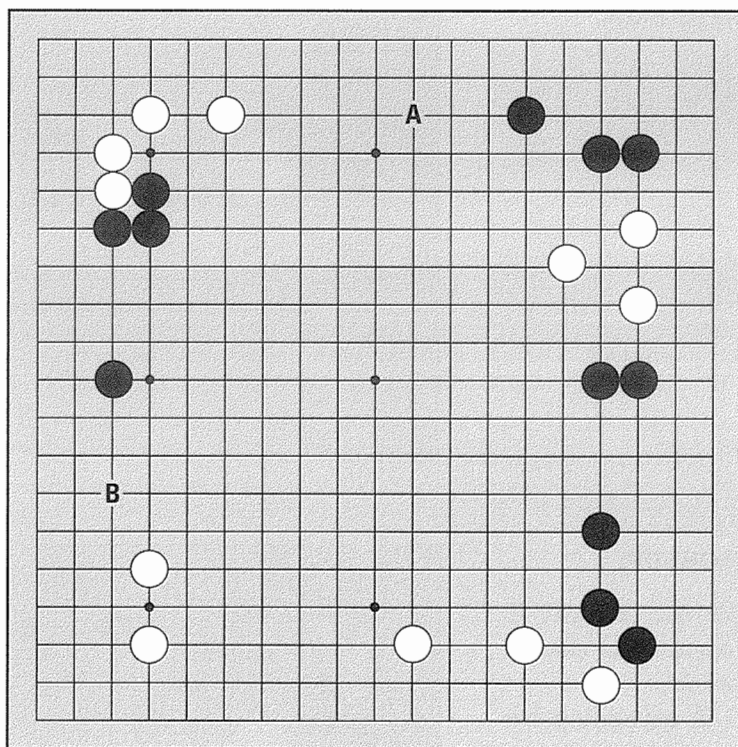


ALLOWS TWO DOUBLE WINGS:

If White plays at 1 here, Black's play at 2 is too big.



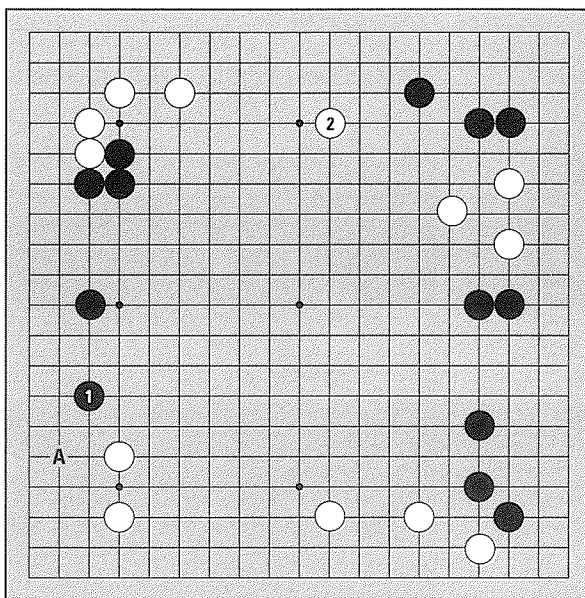
Black's turn to play – is A or B better?



Opening: Test Yourself

CORRECT:

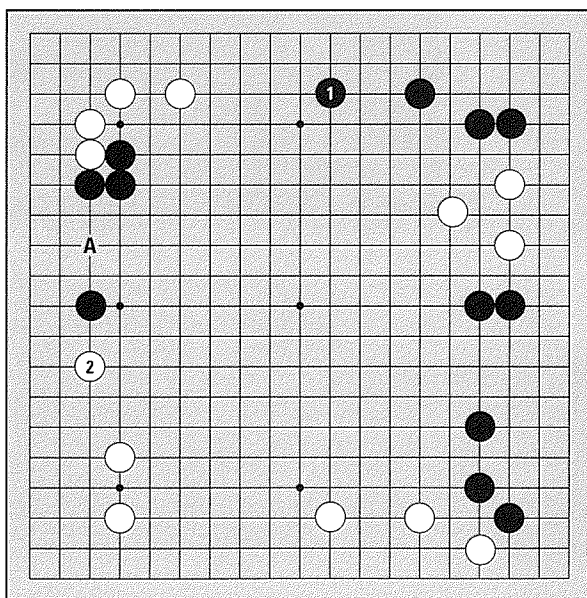
Black 1 is a very big move, and next threatens to slide into White's corner at A. White plays 2, but Black got the bigger move.



MISSES A FOLLOW-UP:

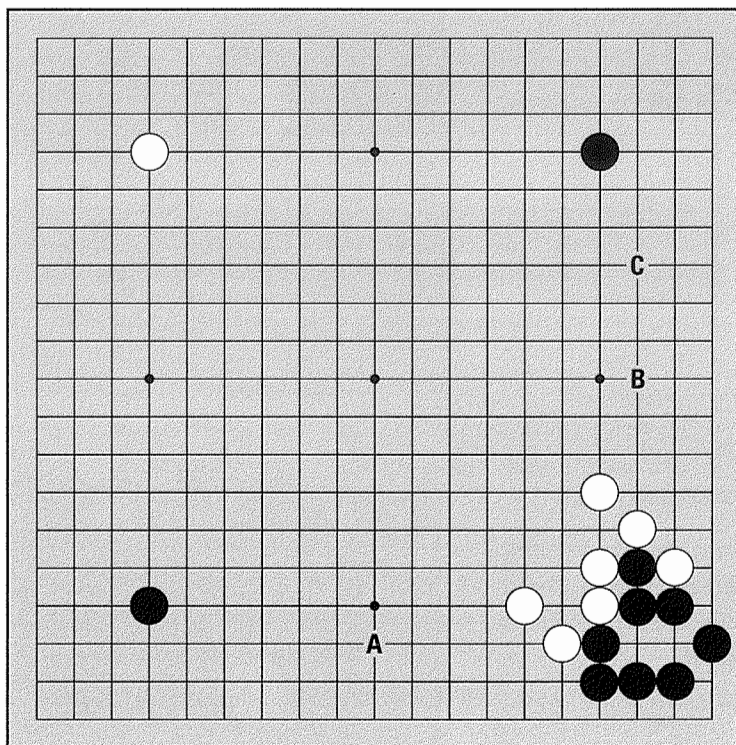
Black 1 expands the territory in the northeast corner, but doesn't threaten a follow-up.

White plays at 2, expanding her corner and next threatening an invasion at A.



QUESTION 9:

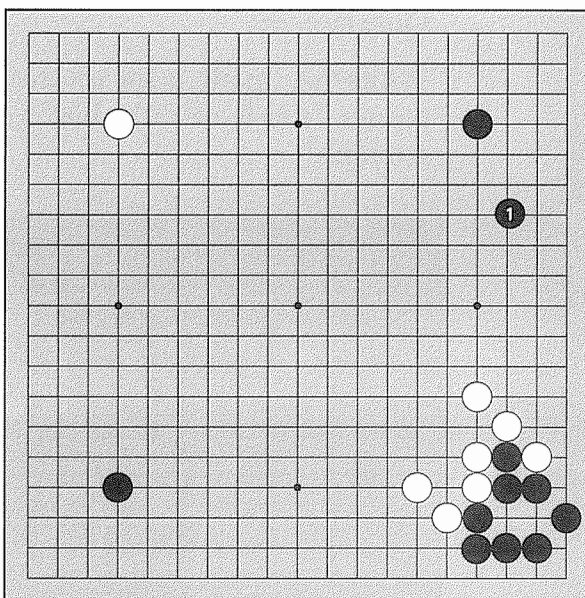
White has made a lot of strength in the southeast corner. Is A, B, or C the best for dealing with White's strength?



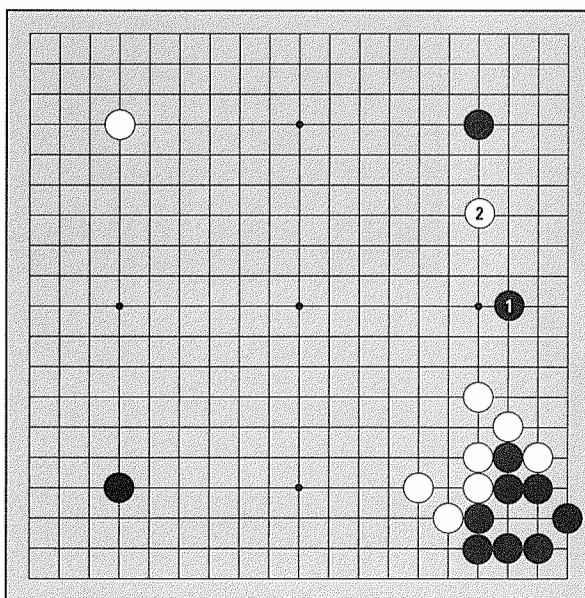
CORRECT:

The south is open, so White will have a little trouble making territory there, so Black concentrates on the east side.

The large knight's move is best in this case.

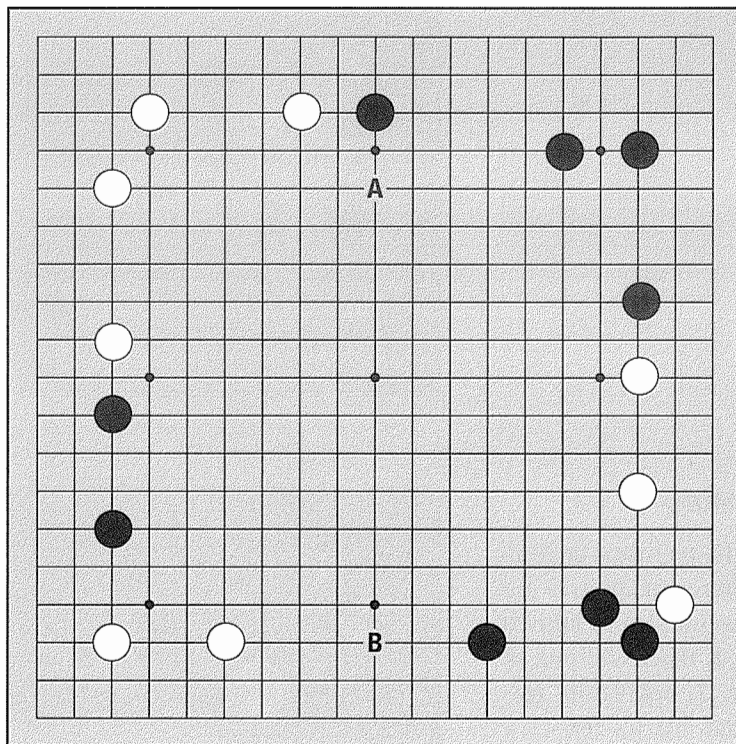
**TOO CLOSE TO STRENGTH:**

Black 1 here is too close to White's strength. White can play at 2 and Black is suddenly deep in White's sphere of influence.



QUESTION 10:

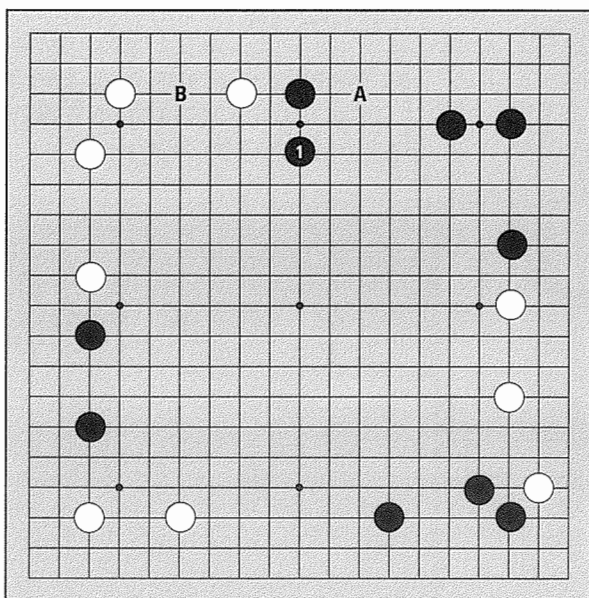
The opening is nearly over, and the middle game fighting of invasions and reductions is about to begin. Where would Black prefer to play, at A or B?



Opening: Test Yourself

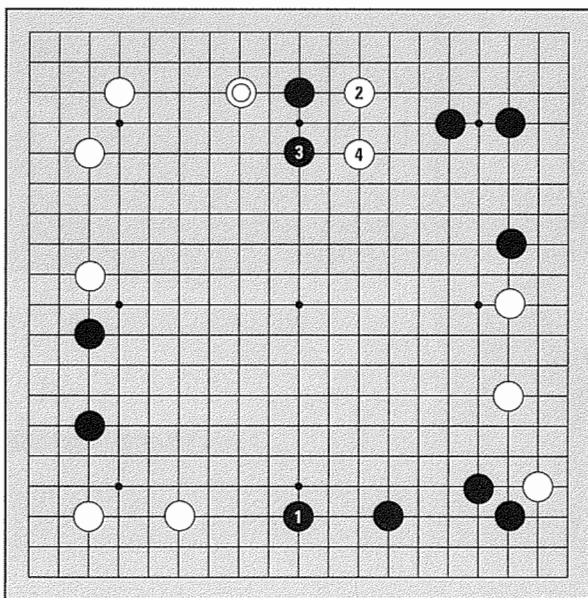
CORRECT:

Black 1, the one-point jump to the center, is the biggest play here, preventing an invasion at A, and creating an invasion possibility at B, while enlarging his northeastern territory.



INVITES INVASION:

If Black takes the territory-enlarging move at 1 here, White uses the marked stone as backup to launch the invasion at 2. Black can run to the center with 3, but White follows with 4, and Black's territory prospects in the northeast have been narrowed.



JUNGSUK PRINCIPLES

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR OPPONENT APPROACHES YOUR CORNER?

Fights are bound to break out when opposing stones operate in close proximity. Many of these fights which have been judged reasonable for both sides have become standardized. These are called standard sequences (*joseki* in Japanese and *jungsuk* in Korean.)

There are many thousands of jungsuk. It's not really necessary (and may not even be a good idea) to memorize lots of them. You already know the six basic relationships between stones. These relationships are the building blocks of jungsuk. You can play Go at a very high level without memorizing any of the complicated sequences you might find in a jungsuk dictionary. Instead of memorizing, you are much better off if you "build your own" jungsuk keeping in mind four fundamental concepts:

1. TRY TO MAKE GOOD SHAPE.
2. TRY TO GET OR KEEP SENTE.
3. TRY TO MAKE A BASE FOR STONES YOU PLAN ON KEEPING.
4. TRY TO PLAY IN CONTEXT OF THE WHOLE BOARD POSITION.

The fourth concept is especially important because most people misunderstand the point of jungsuk. The common misconception is that a jungsuk leads to an equal position locally, so that might seem to be the goal. But since someone is always playing first in a local area, and it is an advantage to play first, it is a poor result for the person who played first if the local position is equal. The idea with a jungsuk is that it should lead to an acceptable (presumably, equal) whole board position for both players.

A corollary of this is that since each game is unique, what happens in practice is that jungsuk are constantly invented, modified, and discarded. You don't want to spend a lot of time memorizing something that constantly changes.

On the other hand, studying jungsuk can be useful from the point of view of learning more about shape, and some subtle aspects such as timing and potential (*aji* in Japanese). Learning a few basic jungsuk can save you from re-inventing the wheel in your own games.

JUNGSUK PRINCIPLES

Diagram A. Here's a game in which three basic jungsuk were played that largely sketched out the corners and sides. After playing in the empty corners, Black plays the knight's enclosure at 5, and White approaches the other corner at 6. The moves from 7 to 12 followed. This is a very frequently played jungsuk. Black comes away with sente and approaches a corner with 13, and White plays a pincer at 14. The moves from 15 to 18 complete another jungsuk. Once again Black ends with sente and approaches another corner at 21, after exchanging 19 for 20. The continuation to 25 is another jungsuk.

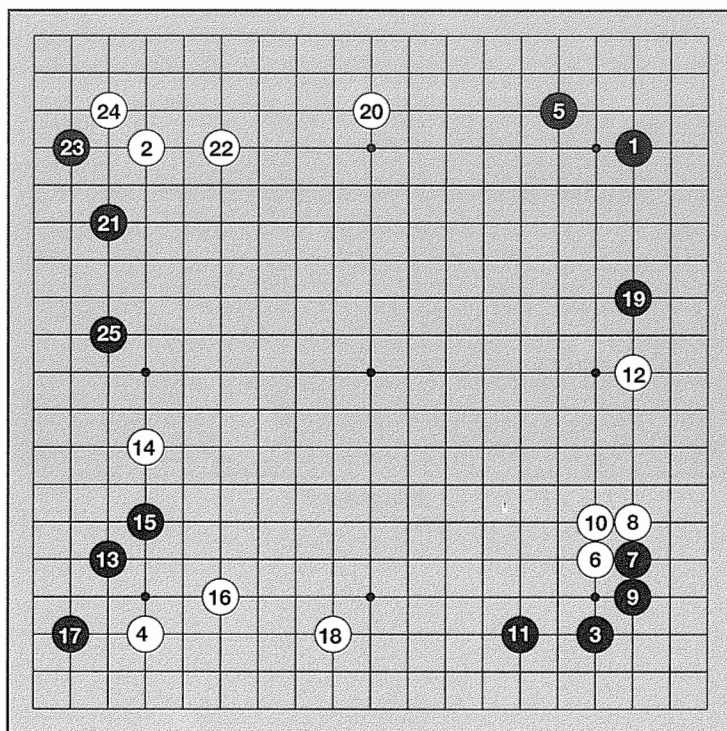


Diagram A

1. THE STAR POINT

Diagram 1. White approached the star point at 1. Which standard sequence should Black choose in this case? You want to choose one that works well with the whole board position.

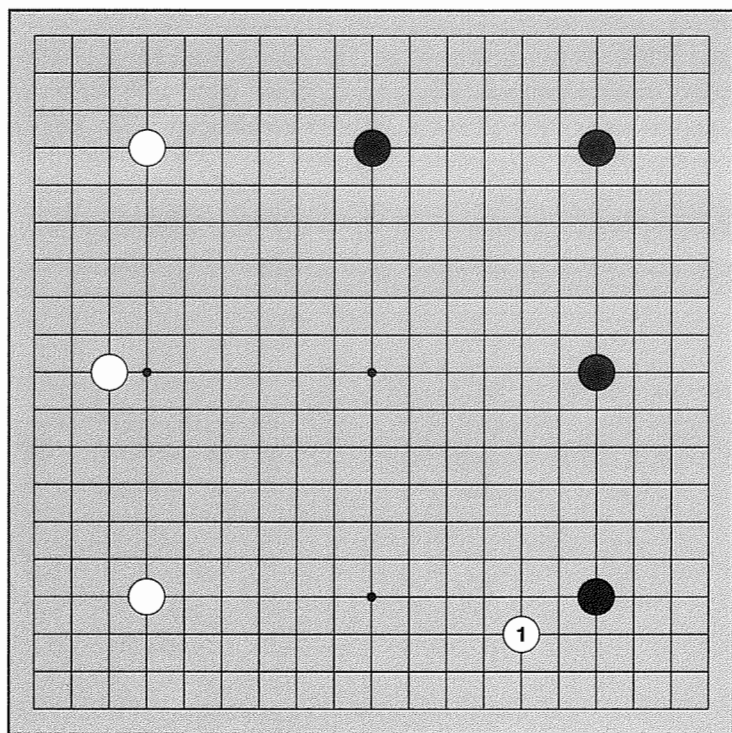


Diagram 1

1. THE STAR POINT

Diagram 2. There are quite a few possibilities. Some sound ones among them are A, B, and C. Let's look at the standard sequences that arise from these moves.

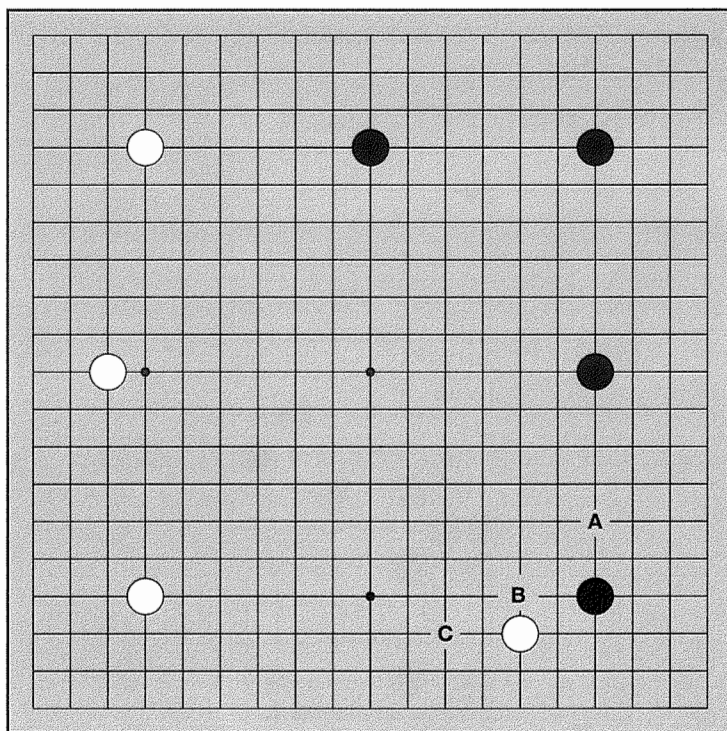


Diagram 2

- A. ONE-POINT JUMP
- B. ATTACHMENT ON TOP
- C. ONE-POINT LOW PINCH

1. THE STAR POINT

A. ONE-POINT JUMP

Diagram 3. A one-point jump at 2 is most common response to White 1. White slides in at 3, Black blocks at 4, and White makes a base at 5. This is the basic star point standard sequence. In Volume III we called this the kite.

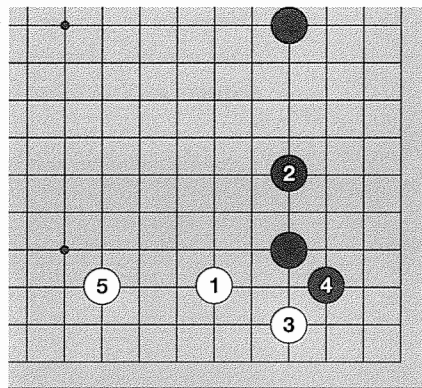


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. Making an extension at White 3 without the slide is also possible. This move looks toward an invasion at A later.

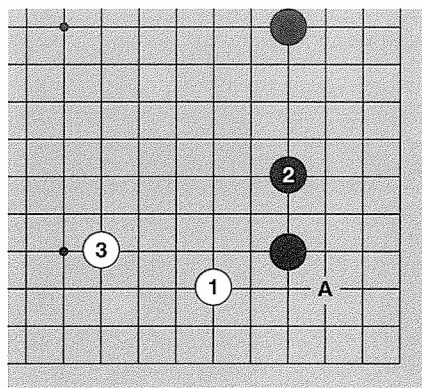


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Depending on the whole board position, White 1 is also possible. As you may guess, White's a little weaker in the east than *Diagram 4*, but a stone at 1 is a little more helpful on the west side. White 1 leaves an invasion point at A for Black. Here also White still looks toward an invasion of the corner at the 3-3 point.

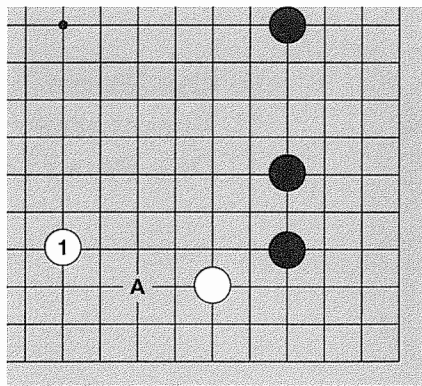


Diagram 5

1. THE STAR POINT B. ATTACHMENT ON TOP

Diagram 6. Black 2, attaching on top of White 1, is another way of playing. White plays the hane at 3, and Black extends at 4, building up strength on the east side. Continuing...

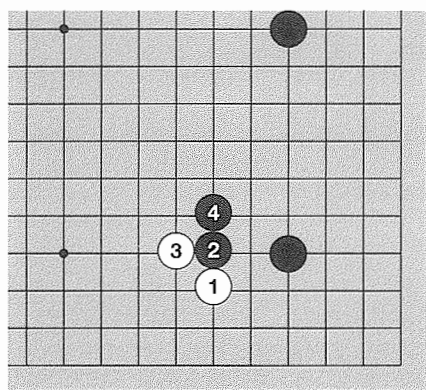


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. White pushes in at 5, and Black blocks at 6. White makes a base at 7 and Black solidifies at 8. The kernel of this standard sequence is the “attach and extend” technique that is also used in many other contexts.

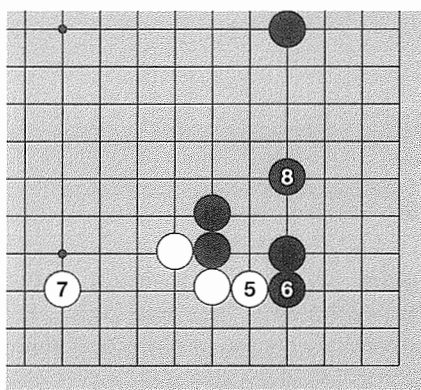


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. If you can make good shape, you can freely adapt a basic standard sequence to fit the whole board position – often this results in a position that can still be found in a jungsuk dictionary as a variation. For example, instead of A, White can play more tightly at 1. After Black 2, White jumps up at 3.

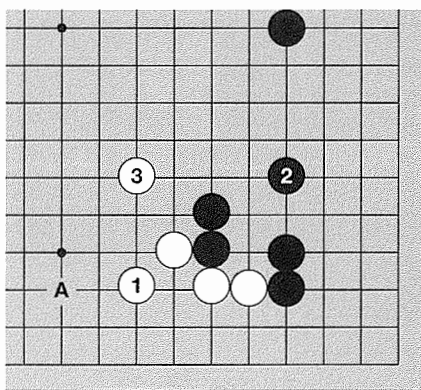


Diagram 8

1. THE STAR POINT

C. ONE-POINT LOW PINCER

Diagram 9. The pincer at Black 2 is very severe, taking away the potential base of White's stone. Sliding at 3 isn't a good idea, as this will commit White to saving stones without a secure base. If she tries to save these stone by jumping out, then Black also jumps at 6.

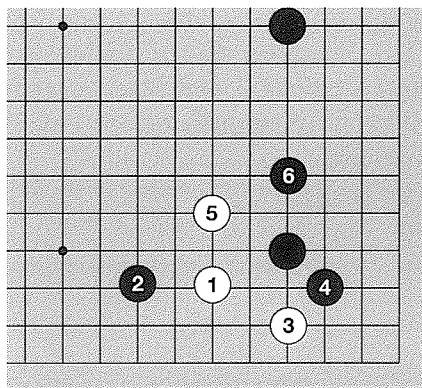


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. A white invasion at the 3-3, the weakness of the star point, is the standard counter move. With this White is willing to abandon her original approach move in exchange for the corner. If Black blocks at 4, the moves from 5 to 11 are standard for a 3-3 invasion of a star point after any pincer of a knight's approach.

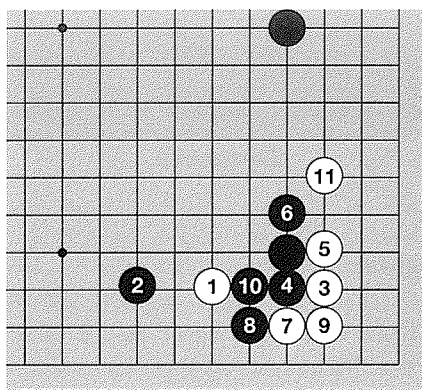


Diagram 10

1. THE STAR POINT C. ONE-POINT LOW PINCER

Diagram 11. When White invades at 1 in response to the one-point low pincer, blocking at 2 to secure the east side is also good. White extends at 3, Black prevents the tiger's mouth at 4, White 5 protects against Black's pushing in and cutting, and Black encloses at 6. White lives in the corner in sente and Black makes influence, good for building a big framework on the east side.

For Black, this standard sequence fits the whole board position very well. Try to choose standard sequences that work well not just in a local context, but one that takes into account stones already on the board.

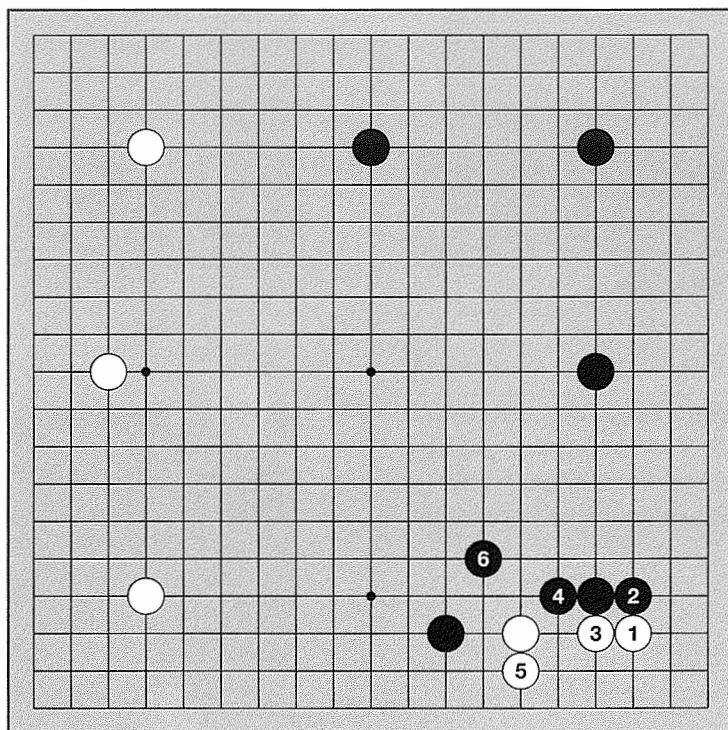


Diagram 11

1. THE STAR POINT

D. ONE-POINT APPROACH

Diagram 12. In choosing a jungsuk in the context of the whole board position, one important consideration is whether to play the third or the fourth line. What happens if White plays a one-point approach? A play on the fourth line emphasizes influence over territory.

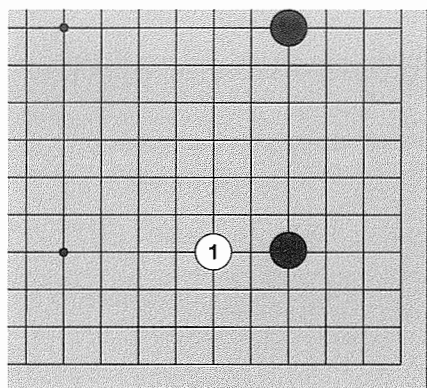


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. The one-point jump at 2 is the most common reply to White 1. White can attach at 3. Since White cedes a substantial amount of corner territory, locally this standard sequence is a little bit better for Black, but White sometimes chooses to play this way when she needs to raise her position.

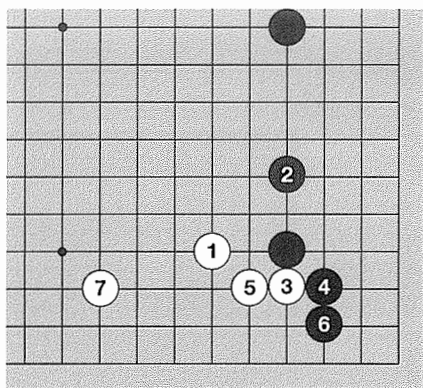


Diagram 13

Diagram 14. Black could also attach at 2. The moves up to 7 are a common pattern. The one-point approach doesn't have as many variations as the knight's approach.

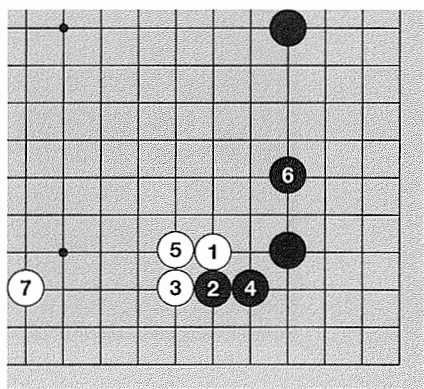


Diagram 14

1. THE STAR POINT E. OTHER POSSIBLE APPROACHES

Diagram 15. The large knight's approach at 1 is rare. The moves up to 5 are one standard sequence.

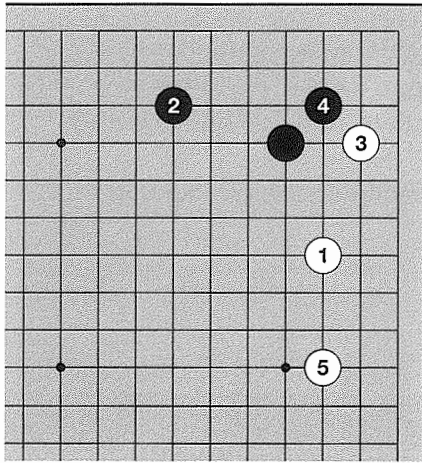


Diagram 15

Diagram 16. The two-point approach at White 1 is only very rarely seen. Black usually plays at 2 or A. White 3 and Black 4 are a reasonable continuation.

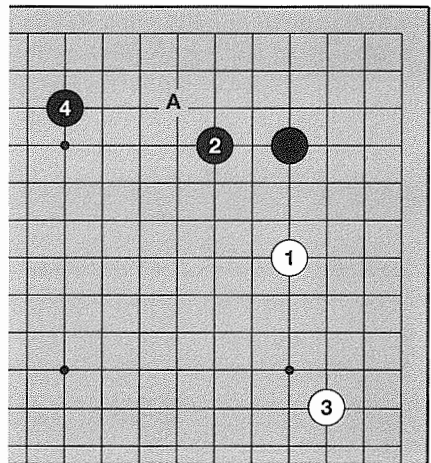
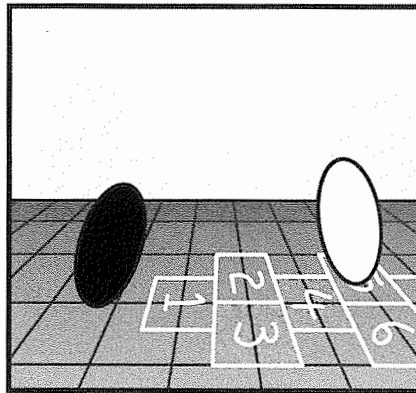


Diagram 16



1. THE STAR POINT

A note on Black's response to White's approaches:

Diagram 17. Here, where there is a white group in the northeast, the one-point jump at Black 2 in response to White 1 leaves Black open on the side. White has the possibility of sliding all the way to A.

Diagram 18. In these cases, Black's response is the knight's move at Black 2. This prevents White from encroaching on the corner from the northeast. In many other situations as well, where Black wants a stone on the third line rather than the fourth to close the side down a bit, Black may choose to play the knight's move instead of the one-point jump.

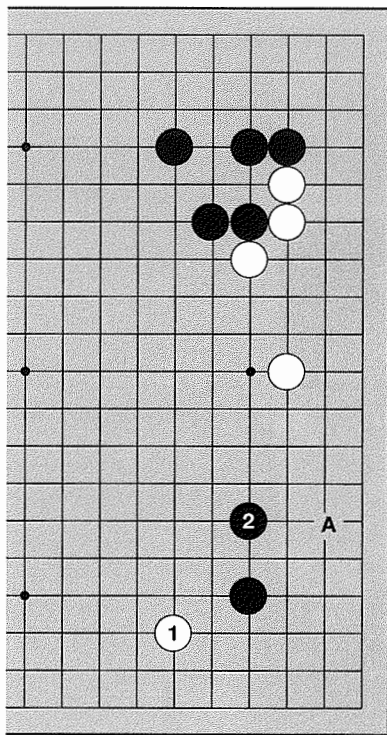


Diagram 17

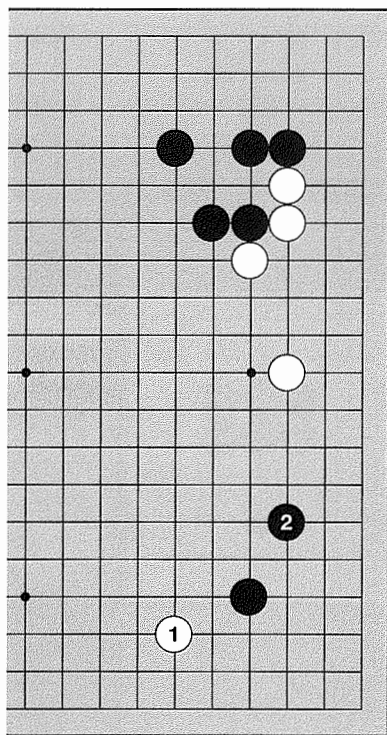


Diagram 18

2. THE 3-4 POINT

There are more standard sequences stemming from the 3-4 point than any other starting position in the corner.

THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

Diagram 1. There are a number of possible responses to White's knight's approach at 1. Black A, B, and C are common.

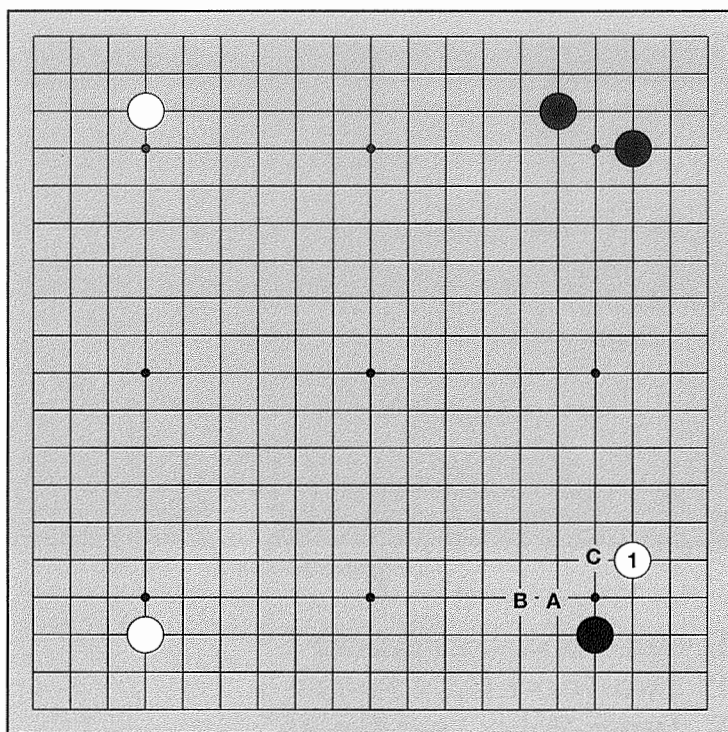


Diagram 1

- A. DIAGONAL
- B. KNIGHT'S MOVE
- C. ATTACHMENT ON TOP

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

Diagram 2. Another very common way of responding is to make a pincer. D, E, and F are three other standard moves.

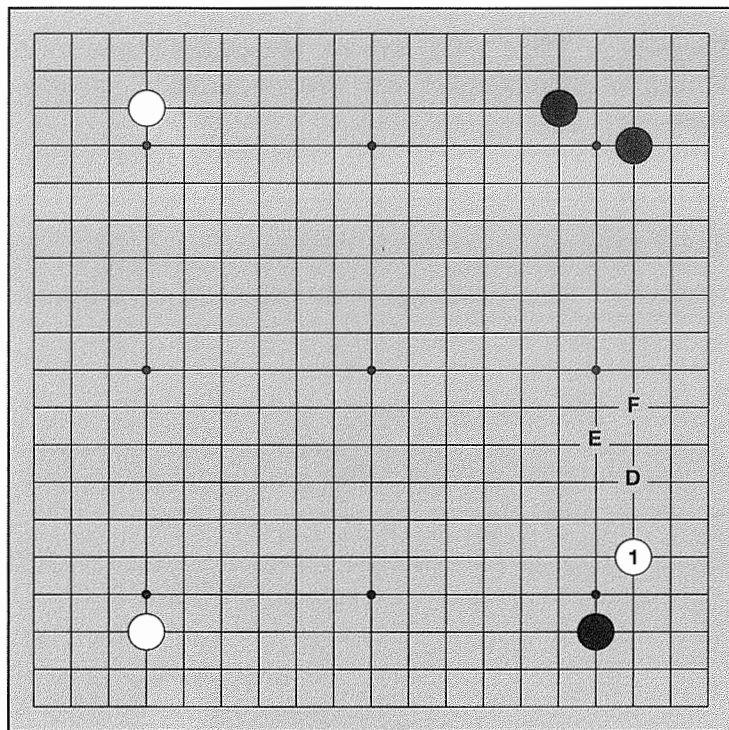


Diagram 2

- D. ONE-POINT LOW PINCER
- E. TWO-POINT HIGH PINCER
- F. THREE-POINT LOW PINCER

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

A. THE DIAGONAL

Diagram 3. The diagonal is a slow, strong move. If White makes a base at 3, Black may play an extension with 4. White 3 can also be played at A or B.

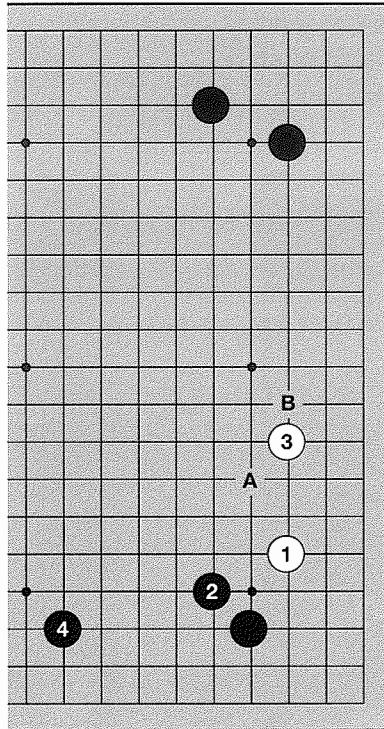


Diagram 3

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

B. THE KNIGHT'S MOVE C. ATTACHMENT ON TOP

Diagram 4. The knight's move at Black 1 is also possible. As you know from the six basic relationships, the knight's move doesn't have the same level of connectivity (i.e. it is not quite as strong) – but it surrounds more quickly (i.e. it is much faster). Black 2 and White 3 are a reasonable continuation.

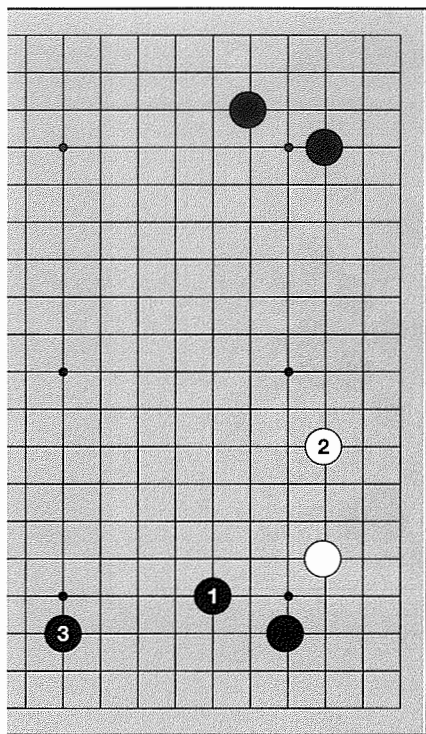


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Black can attach on top at 2, building up a position on the south side. The moves up to 8 are an example of the “attach and extend” technique seen earlier.

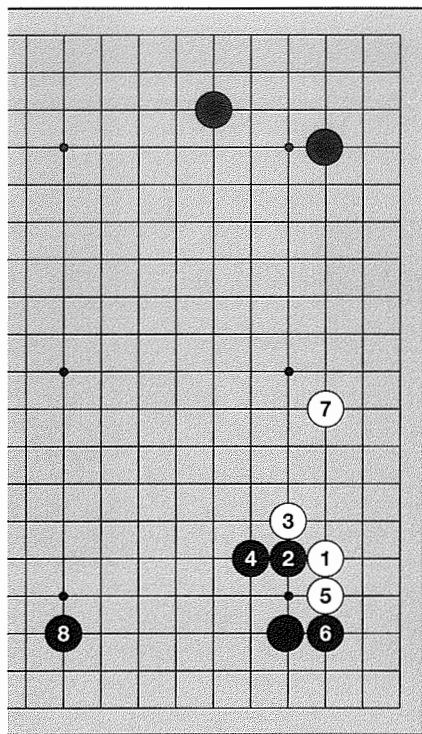


Diagram 5

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

D. ONE-POINT LOW PINCER

Diagram 6. Especially when Black has an enclosure in the northeast corner, the pincer at 1 is a good way to make territory on the east side by attacking. Pincers at A and B are also possible.

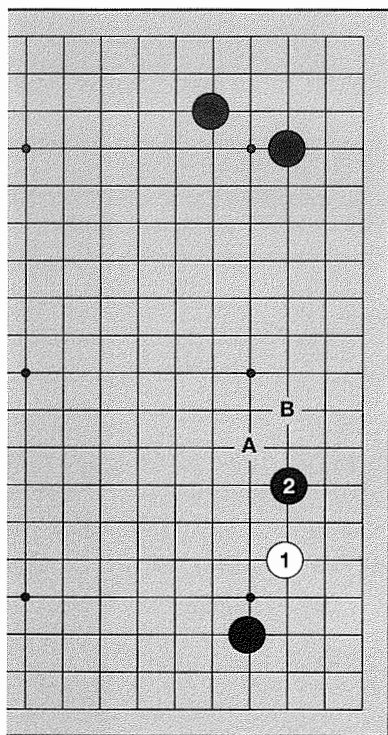


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. If White jumps at 2, Black responds at 3. Pushing from behind with 4 and 6 is not a great idea. Black is making so-called fourth-line territory – usually just too big to compete with.

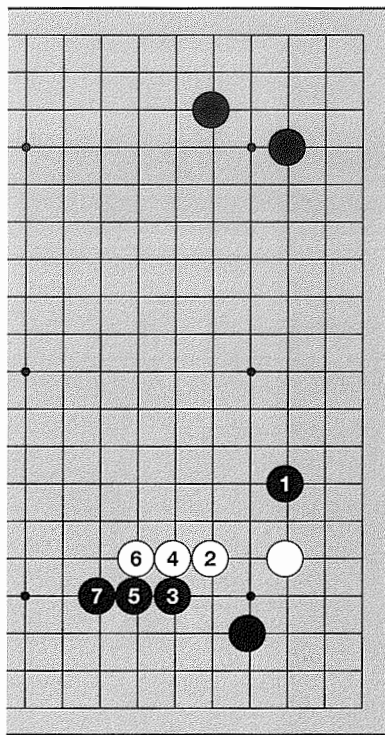


Diagram 7

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

D. ONE-POINT LOW Pincer

Diagram 8. The shoulder hit at White 4 is good in this case. While Black pushes from behind, White builds thickness in the center. The moves up to 13 are a standard sequence that's more difficult than the ones shown so far. There is a little simpler way for White to play.

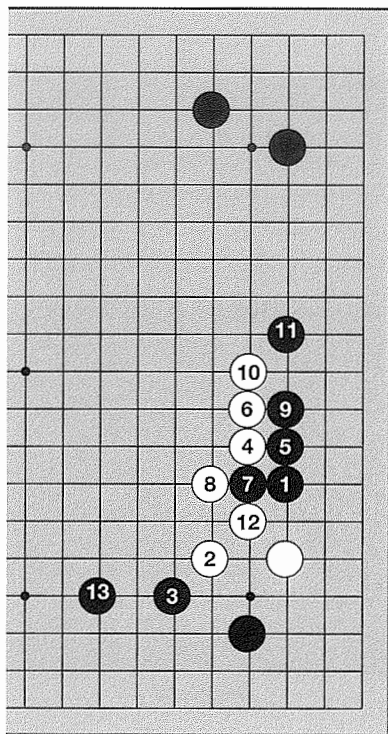


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. White can attach at 2. When Black plays the hane at 3, White makes the tiger's mouth at 4. In the sequence to 8 White makes a base.

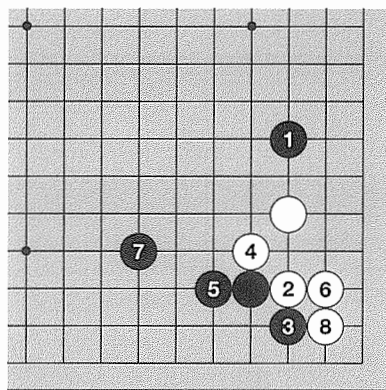


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. After White 4, if Black plays atari at 5, it gets a little complicated again. White sacrifices one stone and exchanges the east for the south side in the sequence to 12.

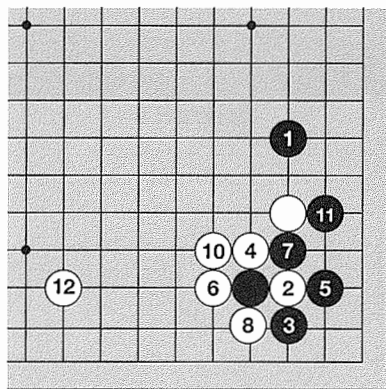


Diagram 10 9... 2

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

E. TWO-POINT HIGH PINCER

Diagram 11. The two-point high pincer is probably the most common response to the knight's approach of White 1. To settle the position quickly...

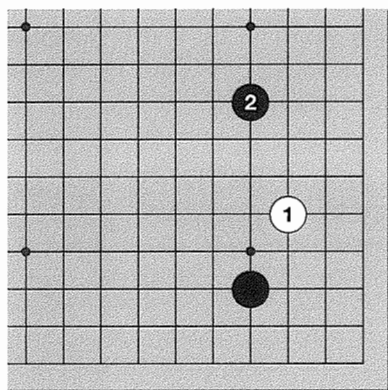


Diagram 11

Diagram 12. White can play the diagonal at 2. If Black 3, then White makes a base with 4. Black plays a side extension at 5 or A.

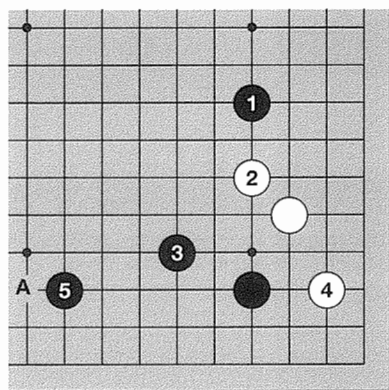


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. The diagonal at 1 is a very solid move. If Black takes White's potential base away at 2, White can play forcing moves at 3 and 5 and extend at 7. Up to Black 8 is standard. White has two possibilities next, at A or B, so White is safe at this point leaving the situation as it is.

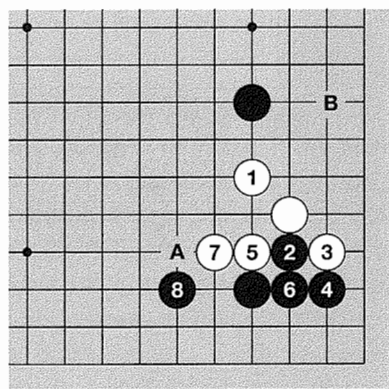


Diagram 13

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE KNIGHT'S APPROACH

F. THREE-POINT LOW PINCER

Diagram 14. Three-point pincers at 1 or A are also possible. Since these pincers are pretty far away, White doesn't feel too threatened.

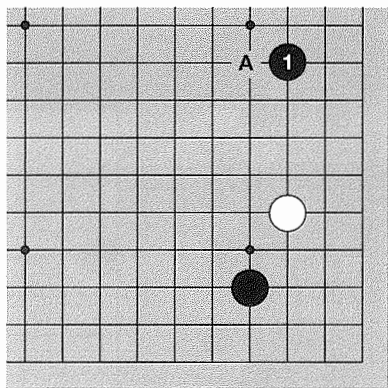


Diagram 14

Diagram 15. One standard sequence is to attach at 2. After Black 7, White can play at A or B to secure a base. If Black plays one, White plays the other – that is, A and B reflect – so White can leave this as it is. Black has played on both sides, usually a jungsuk prize, so he is pretty happy, but White is secure, so she can be satisfied with this result as well.

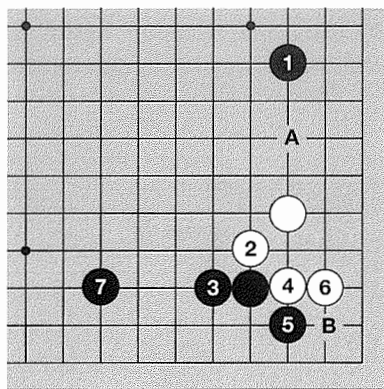


Diagram 15

Diagram 16. Usually in jungsuk, you can resist and get an exchange. After White 2, if Black prevents the tiger's mouth at 3, White plays the hane at 4. If Black cuts at 5, White extends at 6 and in the sequence to 10 can capture Black's stones in the corner. However Black can use these stones as a sacrifice to build thickness on the outside.

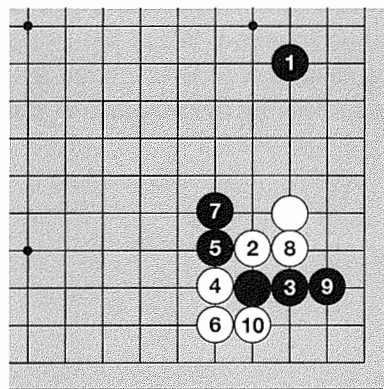


Diagram 16

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE LARGE KNIGHT'S APPROACH THE TWO-POINT APPROACH

Diagram 17. The large knight's approach at Black 1 is a less common move used primarily when trying to make a White pincer less effective. The reasoning is that a pincer, by nature an attacking move, is less effective when the corner pincering stone is further away. Of course Black's approach move is also further away from the corner, so it is less effective as an approach move. In a simple sequence, White secures the corner at 2 and Black makes a base at 3.

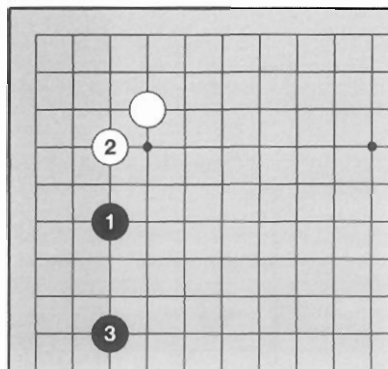


Diagram 17

Diagram 19. White could also go for territory at 2 and 4, then attack at 6. Top players are constantly modifying these very flexible positions.

Or, as with any approach, White always has the option of ignoring Black 1, or Black can also always ignore White 2. Because this approach is so far from the corner and thus less threatening, White frequently ignores it, or if she responds, Black frequently treats it like a forcing move and takes sente elsewhere.

Diagram 18. A two-point approach at 1 is also uncommon but possible. It's okay for Black if White makes the knight's move at 2, and he can make a base with 3.

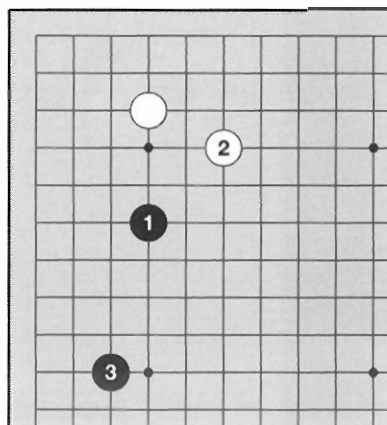


Diagram 18

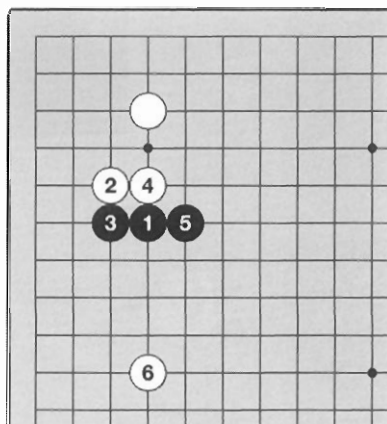


Diagram 19

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE ONE-POINT APPROACH

Diagram 20. The one-point approach to the 3-4 point is also very common. Again, there are a number of possibilities, including the attachments at A and B, the knight's move at C, the pincer at D, and other assorted pincers.

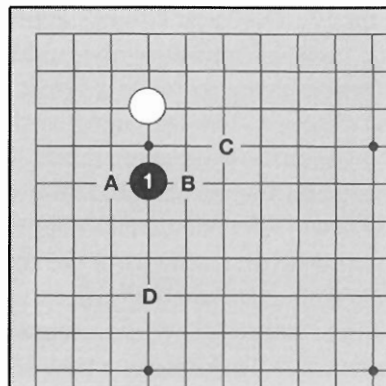
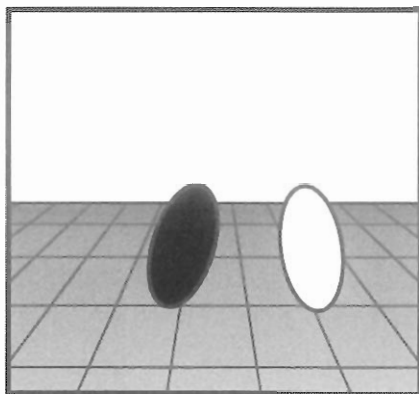


Diagram 20



2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE ONE-POINT APPROACH

A. ATTACHMENT BELOW

Diagram 21. Attaching at White 2 is the most popular method of dealing with the one-point approach. The moves up to 7 are a very frequently used standard sequence, with White making very secure corner territory and Black making a base on the side. With Black 5...

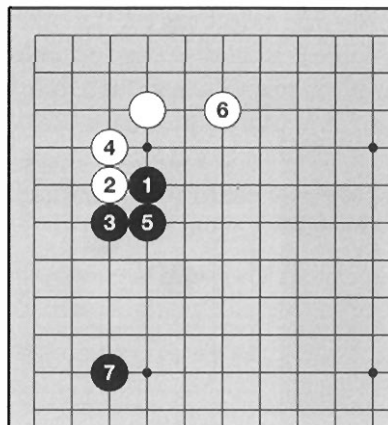


Diagram 21

Diagram 22. A tiger's mouth connection at 1 is also standard. After White 2, Black can play one point further away at 3. These two sequences are very useful to know when you meet with the 3-4 point in your games.

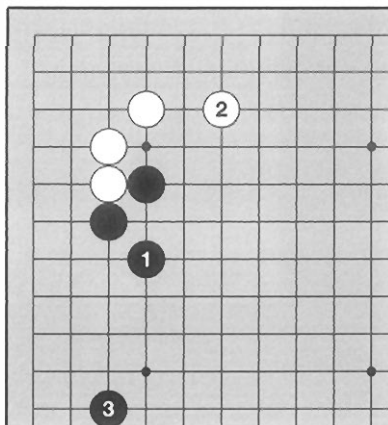


Diagram 22

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE ONE-POINT HIGH APPROACH

B. ATTACHMENT ON TOP

Diagram 23. Attaching on the other side with White 2 is used to develop influence. When Black plays the hane at 3, one variation is for White to pull back at 4, Black makes a tiger's mouth connection at 5, and White stakes a claim to the corner territory with moves 6 and 8.

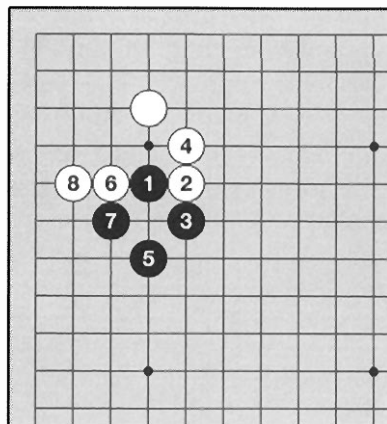


Diagram 23

Diagram 24. With 6, White could also play the hane at 1, continuing with the idea of developing influence.

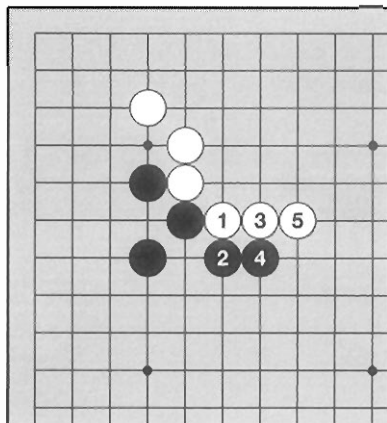


Diagram 24

2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE ONE-POINT HIGH APPROACH C. KNIGHT'S MOVE

Diagram 25. A knight's move at 2 is another response to the one-point approach. The sequence from 3 to 7 is standard. Black 7 may be played at A.

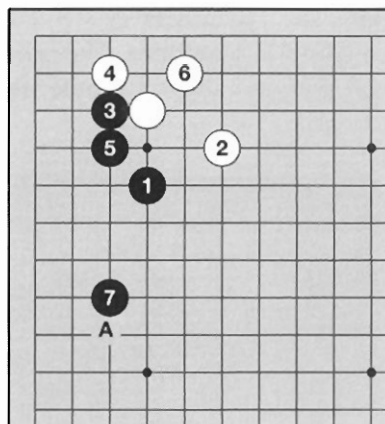
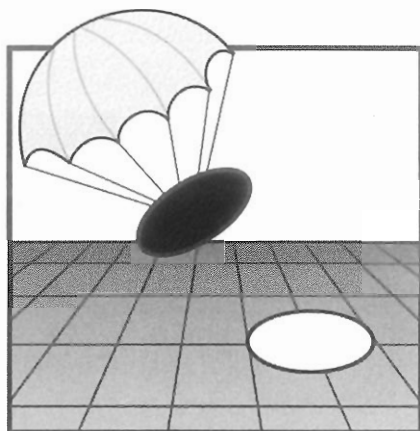


Diagram 25



2. THE 3-4 POINT: THE ONE-POINT HIGH APPROACH

D. TWO-POINT HIGH PINCER

Diagram 26. The pincer at White 2 can lead to complex variations. The moves in the next diagram show a simple way for Black to play.

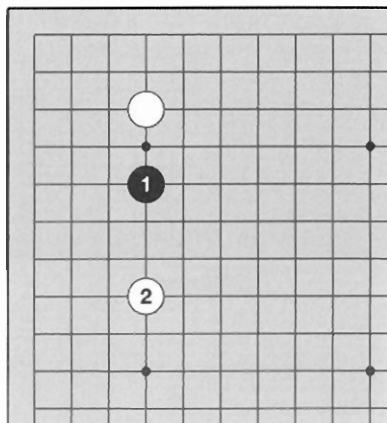


Diagram 26

Diagram 27. Black jumps out at 3. White follows at 4, and Black jumps again at 5. White can take territory with 6. Continuing...

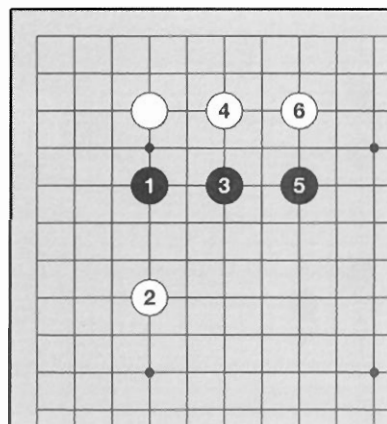


Diagram 27

Diagram 28. Black can attach and pull back at 7 and 9, and attack White's lone stone at 11. This leads to heavy fighting.

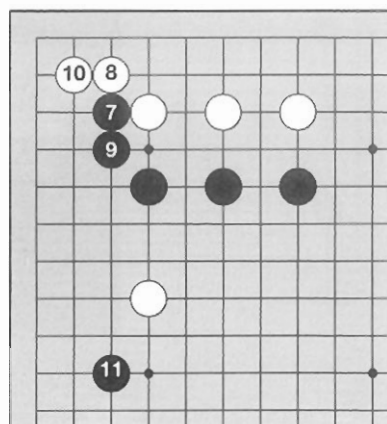


Diagram 28

3. OTHER COMMON JUNGSEUK

The 3-3, 3-5, and 4-5 points are not played as often as the 3-4 point and the star point. But there are some basic jungsuk you can learn to help navigate these less common waters.

THE 3-3 POINT

Diagram 1. One way to take advantage of the weakness of the 3-3 point (namely, that it is low and much more suited to making territory than building influence) is to press White down with the shoulder hit at Black 1. The moves up to Black 7 are standard. White's position is quite low, but she does take territory in sente.

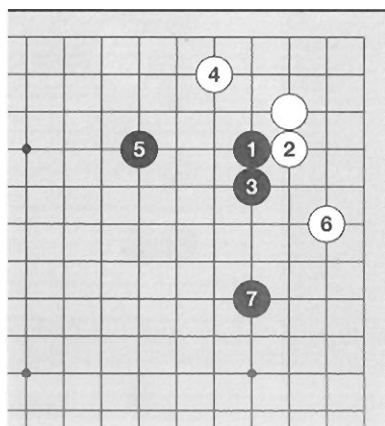


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. Black can also play the large knight's approach. White plays a large knight's move also at 2 and Black makes a base at 3. White can take a big side point at 4.

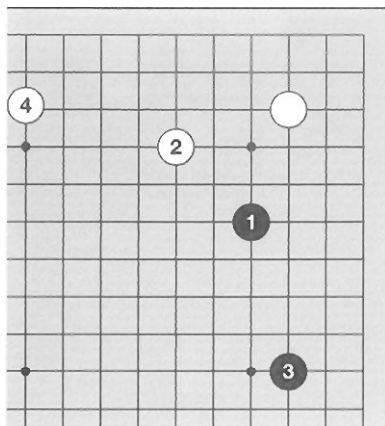


Diagram 2

3. OTHER COMMON JUNGSAK: THE 3-3 POINT

Diagram 3. A simple 3-3 point sequence: a one-point approach at Black 1, White jumps at 2 and Black makes a base at 3.

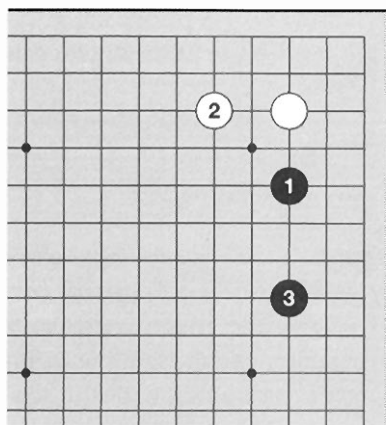


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. Another option is to do nothing at all. Unlike other corner moves, it's difficult to expand from the 3-3 point, so a move here isn't too urgent for White or Black.

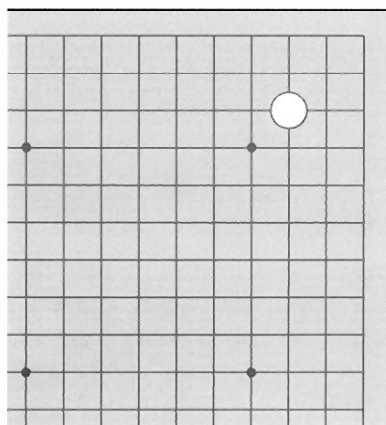


Diagram 4

3. OTHER COMMON JUNGSEUK: THE 3-5 POINT

Diagram 5. The 3-5 point is not as common as the 3-4 point, but it's a favorite among strong players. The reason: if Black is afraid of complications and avoids playing in the corner, it's as if White got two moves for the price of one.

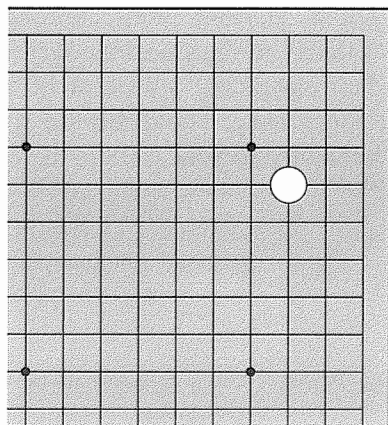


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. If White plays again in the corner, a move on the 3-4 point makes the position the same as if White had played the 3-4 point first and then played a knight's enclosure.

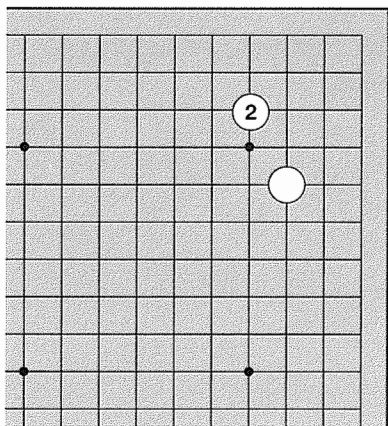


Diagram 6

3. OTHER COMMON JUNGSEUK: THE 3-5 POINT

Diagram 7. The 3-4 point approach at Black 1 makes the position the same as if Black had played the 3-4 point first and White approached. The difference is now it's White's turn to play.

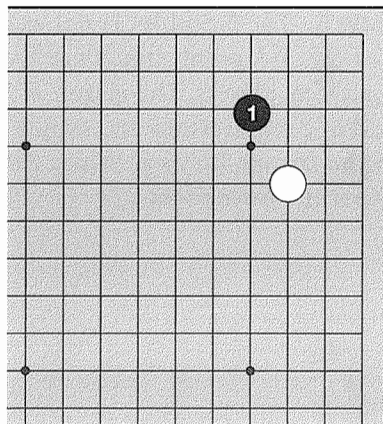


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. In this basic sequence, White presses Black down with 2 and 4. Next she can play 6, making a base and taking a big side point.

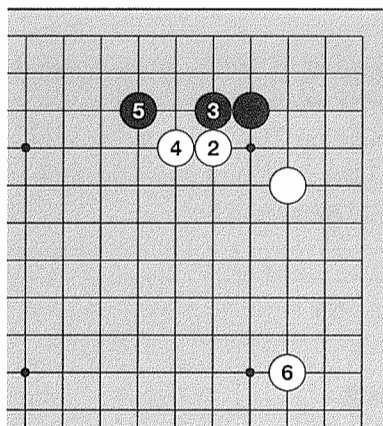


Diagram 8

3. OTHER COMMON JUNGSAK: THE 4-5 POINT

Diagram 9. The 4-5 point is another favorite among strong players.

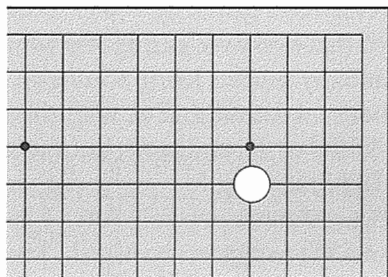


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. The 3-4 approach is the same as if White had played the one-point approach to the 3-4 point, and Black ignored it. In this basic sequence, White presses with the knight's move and builds influence while Black makes a base with 3 and 5. Usually one plays the 4-5 point with the intention of giving away the corner and building influence like this, but one may also go for territory as in the next diagram.

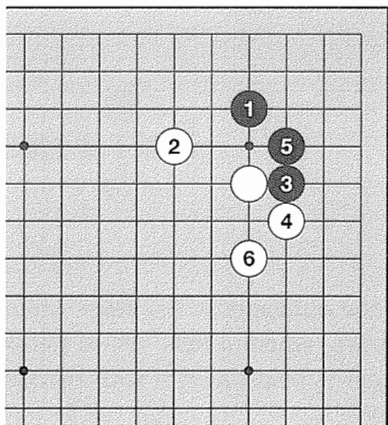


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. If White attaches in the corner at 2, Black 3 and 5 can be expected. Next, White makes a base at 6 and Black raises his position with 7. This gives the same result as in the sequence where White makes a one-point approach to a 3-4 point, Black plays at 7, and White attaches at 2.

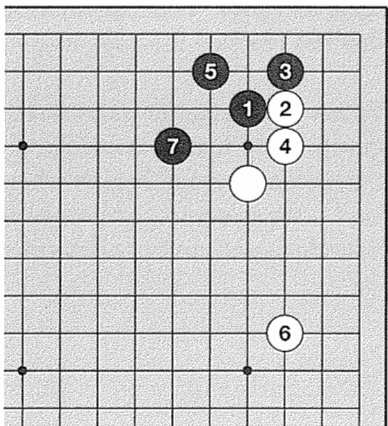


Diagram 11

It seemed like nobody at the Korean Go Academy ever studied the endgame. When we reviewed a game, we'd stop somewhere where it was considered "over" – taking it for granted that everyone's endgame would be perfect. However, my endgame was far from perfect, and my teacher Jeong Soo-hyun had to spend a few remedial hours with me going over the basics. I found that as with the other elements of Go, it takes a lot of practice to become skillful at the endgame, but the list of things you need to remember is actually pretty small. The first thing Mr. Jeong did was show me an endgame position and ask, "Where are the big endgame points?" After I indicated the six or seven places where it looked like there was big endgame, he asked, "How many of those points should you get?" In my charitable way, I answered, "Half?" After one of his long pauses, Mr. Jeong replied, "No. You should try to get them all." More than twenty years later, I see this is the essence of understanding the endgame.

BUT FIRST, WHAT IS ENDGAME?

The endgame is the stage where you can probably get the most bang for your learning buck, where a little bit of know-how can translate to a ten- or twenty-point swing in a game. That's a lot if you consider a handicap stone has been said to be worth about seven points.

This stage is primarily one of point calculation, taking into consideration the concepts of sente and gote. "Point calculation" sounds a bit dry, but there's still a lot of Go left in a game that has reached the endgame stage.

Where the endgame starts can be a matter of perspective. After all, capturing a fifty-point group could just be considered a hundred-point endgame move. But generally speaking, the endgame stage begins when all the big groups have been settled and the territories have a set structure, so it's not possible to invade successfully. The idea is to complete the boundaries of territory determined in the middle game.

WHAT IS ENDGAME?

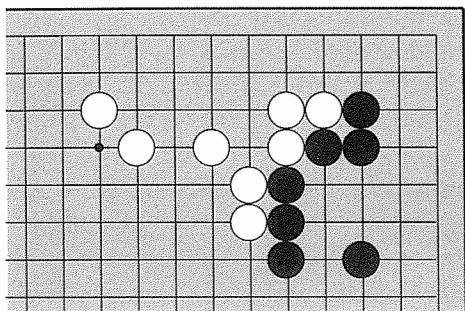


Diagram 1

Diagram 1. This position has reached the endgame stage. (In the examples in this chapter, we'll be just looking at the incomplete boundaries of territories, and ignoring the rest of the board.)

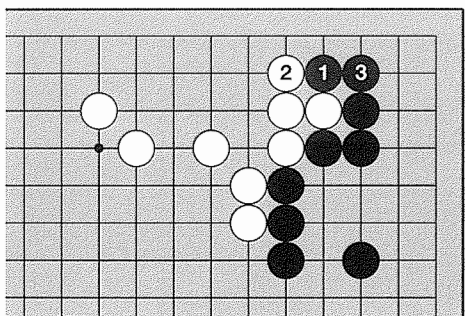


Diagram 2

Diagram 2. Black wants to hane at 1. When White blocks at 2, Black connects at 3. Black's territory gets a little bigger and White's territory gets a little smaller.

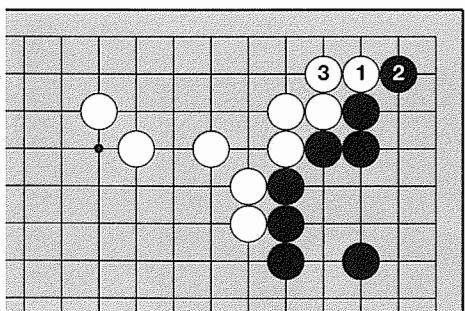


Diagram 3

Diagram 3. White wants to play the hane and connection at 1 and 3. Now White's territory gets bigger and Black's gets smaller. Such is the endgame.

The Endgame

SENTE AND GOTE

Sente and gote are key concepts in the endgame. Having sente means that it is your turn. You have the initiative, so you get to play first. A sente move contains a threat that your opponent will either have to answer, or lose something if the threat is carried out. Keeping sente means that your opponent has answered (rather than just ignoring you) and so you maintain the initiative to play somewhere else.

In Korean, sometimes we say that your sente move is your “right” to play, since if your opponent has to answer you, playing a sente move doesn’t cost you your turn. Gote is essentially the opposite. Your opponent doesn’t have to answer a gote move, so you lose the initiative. Sente is so valuable there is a Go saying: “Even if you have to sacrifice stones, get sente.”

Diagram 1. There are big sente endgame moves in this position.

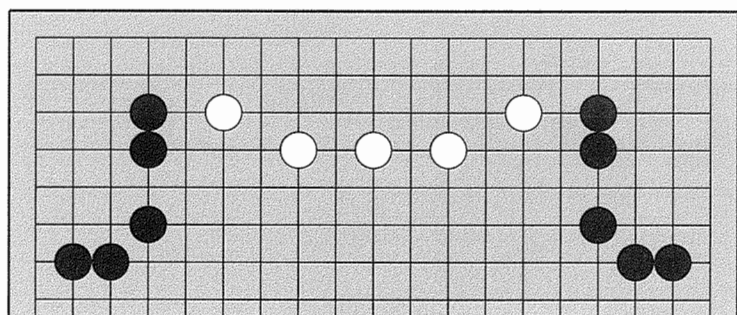


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If it's Black's turn to play, he plays the diagonal at 1.

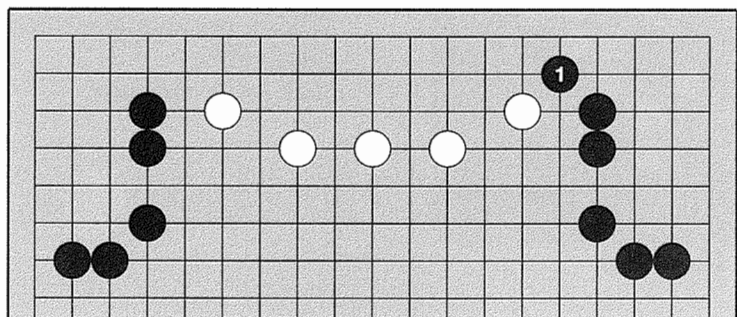


Diagram 2

SENTE AND GOTE

Diagram 3. If White doesn't answer Black A, Black can destroy White's territory at 1. So with rare exceptions, White responds to this diagonal.

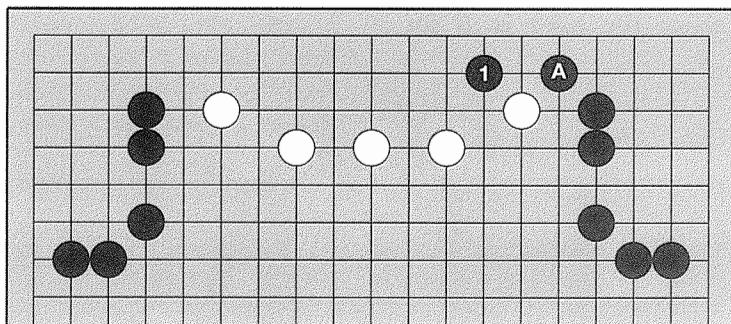


Diagram 3

Diagram 4. White blocks at 2. This means that Black keeps sente – and Black 1 was sente endgame. Next Black can play somewhere else, like the other diagonal at 3. White answers at 4 to keep the side territory, so Black 3 is sente endgame as well. Black has played first in two areas, and it's still his turn. Black is gaining a lot for free – it's not costing him a move to increase his territory and reduce White's. This is the value of sente: as the song goes, you get your money for nothing.

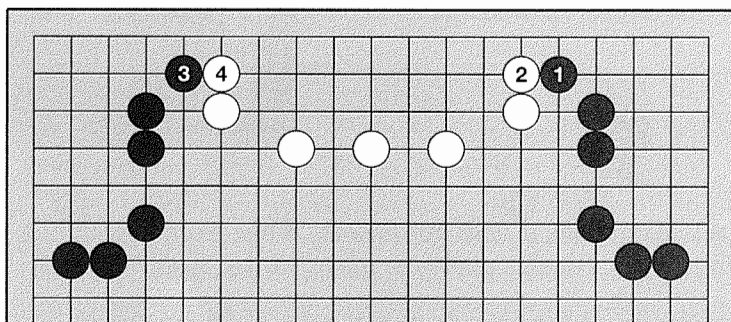


Diagram 4

When an endgame move is sente for both sides, we say it is double sente. Double sente is the most valuable endgame.

The Endgame

SENTE AND GOTE

Let's look at an example of an endgame move that is sente for only one side.

Diagram 5. Is the hane at A sente for Black? What about the hane at B for White?

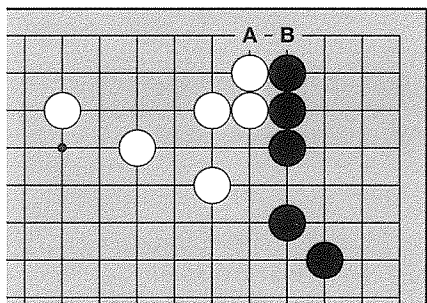


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. The hane at 1 is sente because after White connects at 3, Black must answer to keep the corner. If Black doesn't connect with 4, White can cut at 4, destroying the corner territory.

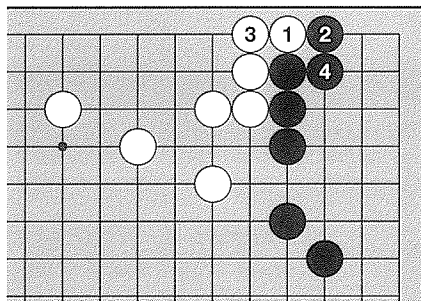


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. What about Black's hane? Because White A makes a tiger's mouth connection, White doesn't need to answer when Black connects at 3. So the hane is gote for Black.

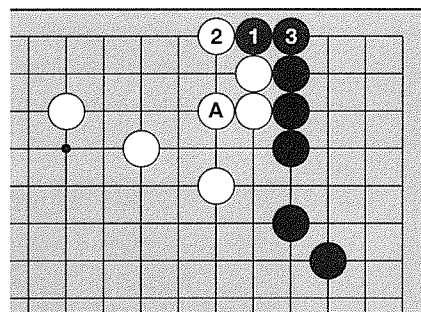


Diagram 7

However, if Black plays there, it does not prevent White from playing the sente move. To distinguish it from a less valuable pure gote move, we say Black 1 is reverse sente.

Note that although Black's hane is gote, it may seem at first glance to be sente, because it looks like White answers at 2. But White is not really "answering" but playing a sente move – Black has to connect, or there was no point in playing the hane in the first place. There can be a number of moves involved in an endgame sequence, but the key to whether it is really sente is whether it's still your turn when the sequence is over.

SENTE AND GOTE

Diagram 8. Is taking one white stone at 1 sente?

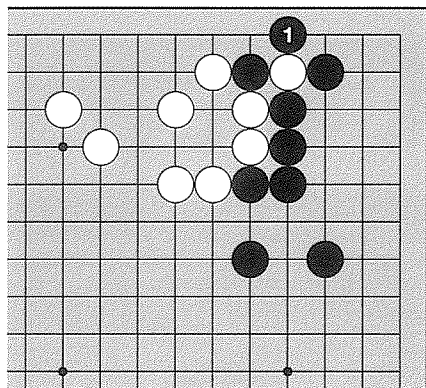


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. After Black takes, White is okay even if she doesn't answer – since if Black plays the hane at A, White blocks at B. So Black 1 is gote endgame.

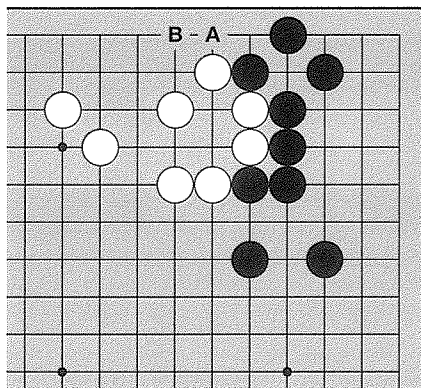


Diagram 9

Diagram 10. White's capture at 1 is also gote.

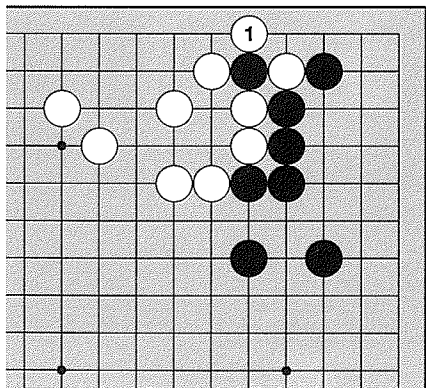


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. Black doesn't have to respond. If White plays the hane at 1, Black can extend at 2.

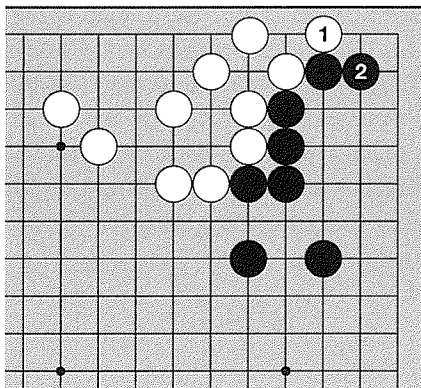


Diagram 11

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 1. In this position, how big is the hane and connection on the first line?

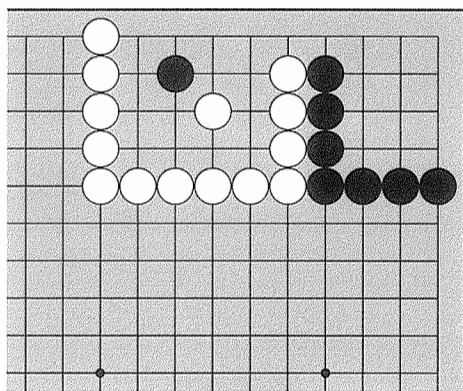


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If Black plays the hane and connects at 1 and 3, White blocks at 2 and connects at 4. If White doesn't connect, Black can cut at 4 and catch one white stone. Compare this to the next diagram.

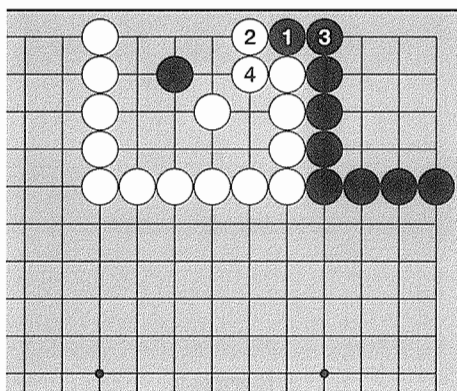


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. If White plays the hane and connection at 1 and 3 here, then Black has to block at 2 and connect at 4. Compared to *Diagram 2*, White has gained two points at the places marked X. Also, Black has lost two points at 2 and 4. White gained two points and destroyed two potential points. Adding them together, we get a total value of four points.

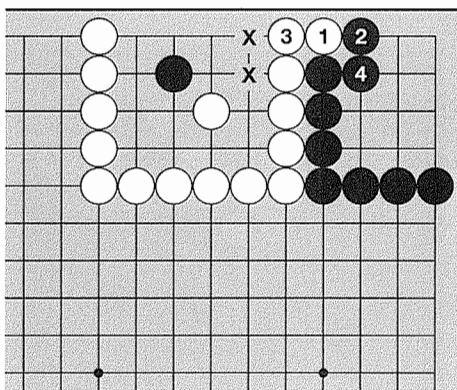


Diagram 3

The next example is a bit more difficult.

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 4. How big an endgame play is a hane and connection on the second line here?

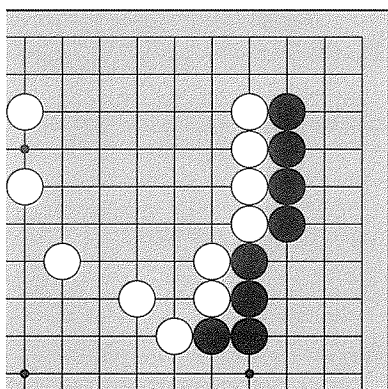


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. If Black plays the hane and connection at 1 and 3, the boundary of the territories is still undetermined. We need another step to determine the final boundaries. We'll call this two-step endgame.

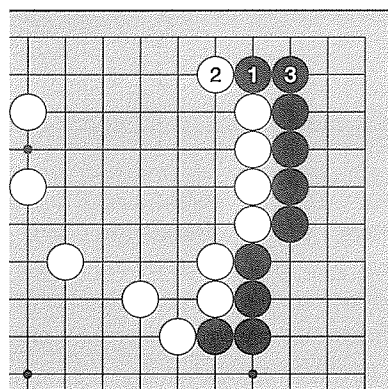


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. To complete the boundaries, later Black can follow up by playing the hane on the first line at 1. White has to extend at 2, Black pushes in at 3, White blocks at 4, and both sides connect. (If White blocks at 3 instead of extending at 2, Black can cut at 2 and cause problems.)

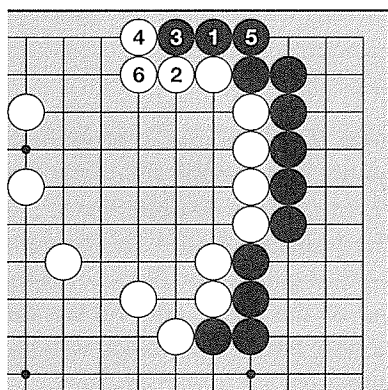


Diagram 6

The Endgame

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 7. Back to the original position. If White plays here first, she plays the hane and connection at 1 and 3.

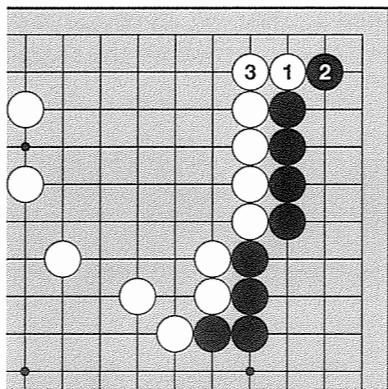


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. To determine the final boundary of these territories, later White can follow up by playing the hane at 1. This follow up is sente: to avoid a cut at A, Black needs to extend at 2.

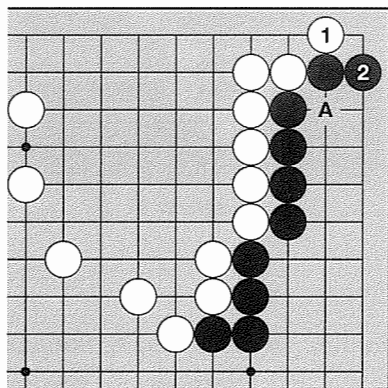


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. When Black plays first and follows up, he gains the six points marked X here, in contrast to *Diagram 8*. (Notice that the point marked A in *Diagram 8* is also a point gained for Black – because at the end of the game, after all the neutral points have been filled, Black will have to connect at A.)

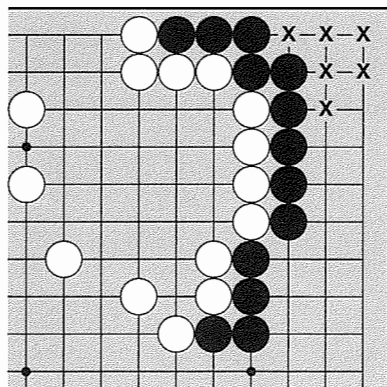


Diagram 9

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 10. When White plays first and follows up, White gains the seven points marked X, in contrast to *Diagram 9*.

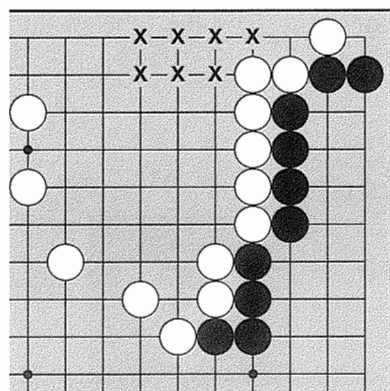


Diagram 10

Comparing the two results, Black gains six points and destroys seven potential points. You could also look at the other side and calculate that White gains seven points and destroys six potential points. The swing in territory is thirteen points. This means that the hane and connection in *Diagram 4* is worth thirteen points in total.

To calculate the value of an endgame move, here's a method that I find is the simplest:

1. Imagine you play first. If the boundary is still incomplete, imagine all the sente follow-ups – that is, imagine you play all the follow-ups that are sente for you, and your opponent plays all the follow-ups that are sente for her. Imagine you play any gote follow-ups.
2. Next imagine your opponent plays first. Again, if the boundary is still incomplete, imagine all the sente follow-ups – you play your sente, and your opponent plays her sente. Imagine your opponent plays any gote follow-ups.
3. Compare 1 & 2. Calculate the swing in territory by figuring out one side's points gained and potential points destroyed and add them together. If the follow-ups were all sente, this is the value of the move.
4. If a follow-up is gote, calculate the value of that follow-up and subtract half that value from the total you got in step 3. This is the value of the move "adjusted for gote." This may sound a bit complicated, but once you get the hang of counting, it is not as difficult as it sounds. Also, you can often use the shortcut of dropping an imaginary line down to the edge when the follow-ups are gote.

The Endgame

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 11. What's the value of the hane at Black 1?

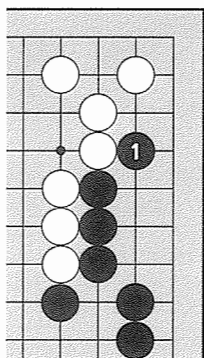


Diagram 11

Diagram 12. When White blocks and Black connects, the boundaries are still not complete. The follow-up hane connection on the first line isn't sente, so imagine that Black plays it in the sequence A-B-C.

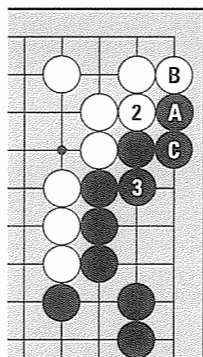


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. Next, we imagine White plays first. After Black blocks and White connects, again the boundaries are not complete. Once again the follow-up hane-connection on the first line is not sente, so imagine White plays it in the sequence A-B-C.

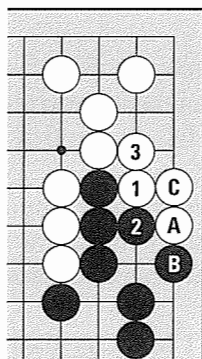


Diagram 13

Comparing the two diagrams, White has gained four points and destroyed four potential points, so the swing is eight points. The follow-ups were gote, so we have to adjust for that. Black's follow-up, the hane-connection on the first line, is worth two points. We subtract half of its value, or one point. White's follow-up was also two points, so we subtract half of its value, or another point. This leaves us with a total value of six points.

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Diagram 14. A shortcut in this type of situation is to “drop a line” down to the edge. After Black plays the hane, White blocks, and Black connects, you can just imagine you drop the marked stones down to the edge.

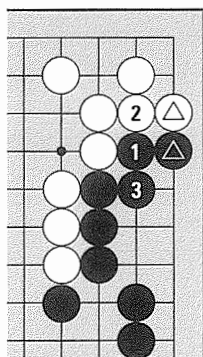


Diagram 14

Diagram 15. Compare this to when White plays the hane, Black blocks, and White connects, again imagining dropping the marked stones down to the edge.

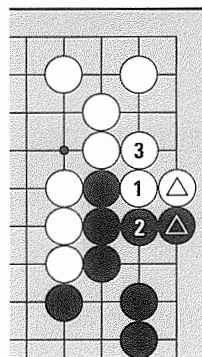
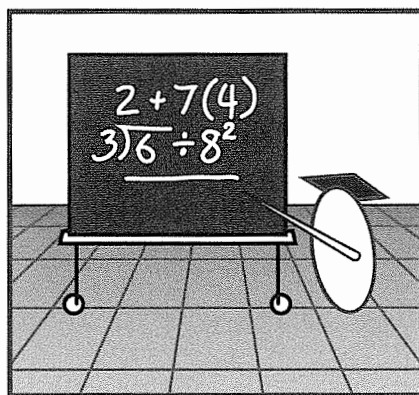


Diagram 15

What you’re really doing when calculating endgame with gote follow-ups is splitting the difference between Black and White, and dropping an imaginary line to the edge serves the same purpose. Here Black has gained three points and destroyed three potential points, so once again we arrive at a total value of six points.



The Endgame

HOW TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES

Let's look at one more example of a endgame size calculation, this time involving killing a small group.

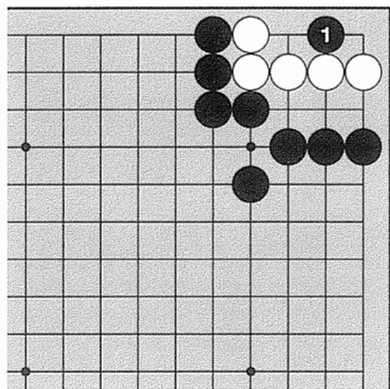


Diagram 16

Diagram 16. Black 1 kills by playing in the center. How big is this move? To calculate the value, first count the territory Black gains: he captures five stones, equal to ten points of territory, and all the points within his wall become territory as well, so Black gains a total of fifteen points.

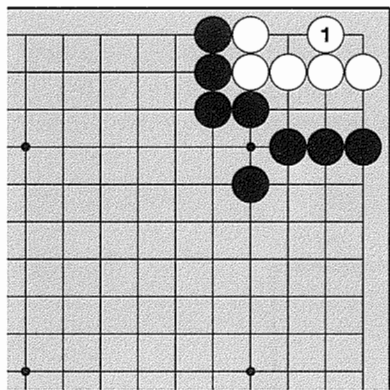


Diagram 17

Diagram 17. If White plays at 1 to make life, she makes two points. The fifteen points Black gained plus the two potential points destroyed equals seventeen points. (You can always look at it the other way: comparing the two diagrams, White gained two points and destroyed fifteen potential points.) That means that White 1 here or Black 1 in *Diagram 15* are seventeen-point endgame moves.

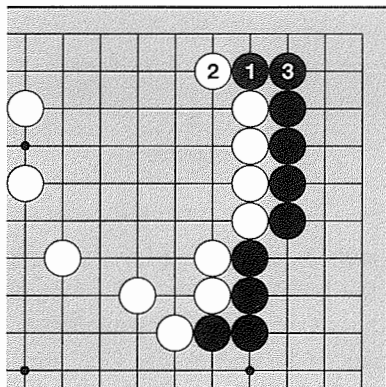
EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

Why do we count follow-ups? Why does it matter whether the follow-up is sente or gote? Why do we give full value to a sente follow-up but only half to a gote follow-up?

When we say it a move is sente or it's your "right" to play it, it doesn't mean that you will play it for certain or that your opponent can't play it. What it does mean is that you can play it, or you can get its equivalent value elsewhere. Why is that? Because if it's sente for you but gote for your opponent, if your opponent plays it, you don't have to answer. You can play somewhere else – presumably somewhere with value – so your opponent can't prevent you from getting the value out of your sente moves, whether it's by actually playing them, or playing somewhere else. You can imagine from this why double sente moves are very important to grab right away, because they are free points for whoever gets there first.

We have to give full value to the sente follow-ups in multi-step endgame for the same reason.

In our earlier example, note after Black plays the hane and connection at 1 and 3, the follow-up hane on the first line is Black's "right", that is, it's sente for Black to play here, and gote if White plays here. Once again, this doesn't mean that Black will play here for certain – although usually he will, since White won't have time to play many reverse-sente moves. It does mean, though, that it doesn't cost Black a move to play here, since after he does and White answers, it will still be his turn. If White plays it, it is at the cost of a move: Black doesn't have to answer, and so he will take another endgame play, presumably worth as much as White took in reverse sente. If there isn't such a play, Black probably missed his chance to play the move that was his "right" to play.



We only count half the value of a gote follow-up for the same reason – it's not fair to count the full value of the follow-up, if it's nobody's right to play it. In that case you have to split the difference.

The Endgame

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Where does one find big endgame? Usually, these trophy beasts hide on the edges, disguising themselves as ordinary endgame moves.

Diagram 1. It's very big for both sides to play here.

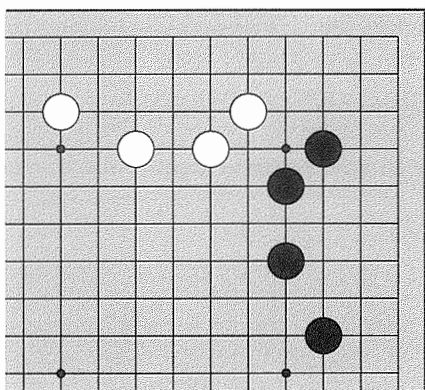


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If Black plays, Black 1 secures the corner. If White 2, Black can block at 3. (Black can also play 1 at 3.)

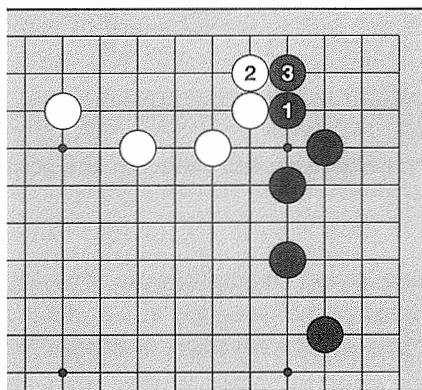


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. If White plays, she slides in with the knight's move at 1. Later, assuming that A is sente because Black needs to block at B, and White C is also sente, playing here first is worth about twenty points.

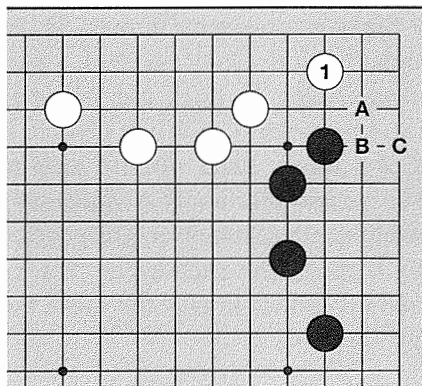


Diagram 3

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Diagram 4. In this shape, extending at Black 1 is very big. (A hane is also possible – but Black is trying to maintain sente by encouraging a gote block by White.)

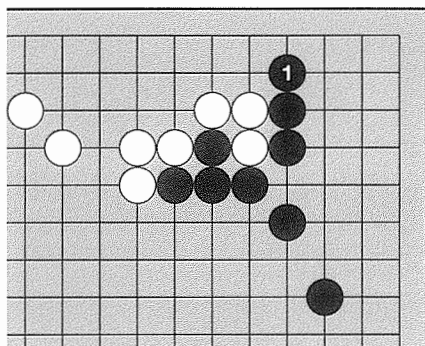


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. Later, Black can attach at 1 and squeeze in sente. The follow-up hane is also sente.

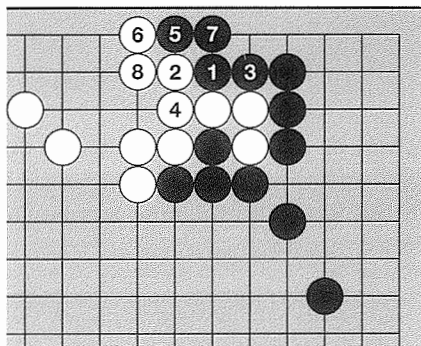


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. For White, it's big to play at 1 and 3.

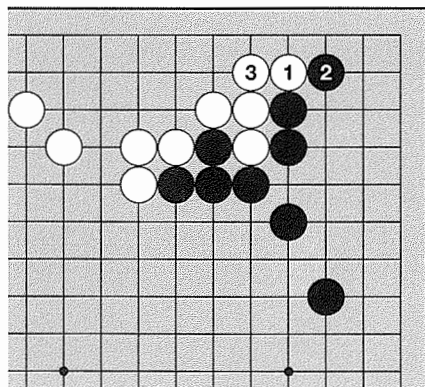


Diagram 6

Diagram 7. Later, White can play the clamp at 1 and cross underneath, significantly reducing Black's corner. (If Black extends down at 3 instead of Black 2, White cuts at 2 and catches two stones.) Adding what one side gains in playing first with the potential points destroyed, playing here is worth nineteen points.

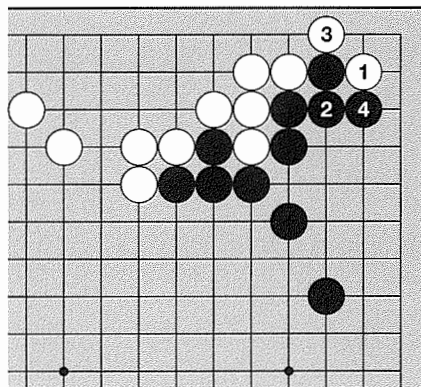


Diagram 7

The Endgame

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

If you calculate the size of endgame moves, you'll often find that moves that look big – like capturing a clump of stones or trying to surround a few points in the center – aren't really so large as the more modest-looking moves on the second line. If you recall the example from the previous section, we saw that killing a group was only worth seventeen points. Both of the last two examples are bigger endgame. Although capturing stones is tempting, you should of course play the bigger endgame first.

Diagram 8. This shape commonly arises from a star-point standard sequence that I call the kite. An endgame move at A is big.

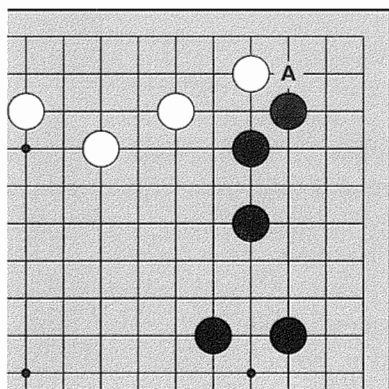


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. If Black blocks at 1, Black makes territory in the corner and threatens to catch a white stone at A.

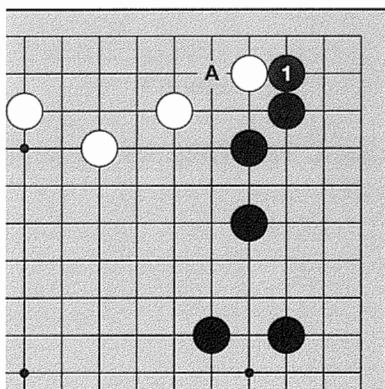


Diagram 9

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Diagram 10. If White pushes in at 1, White's territory gets bigger and Black's is reduced.

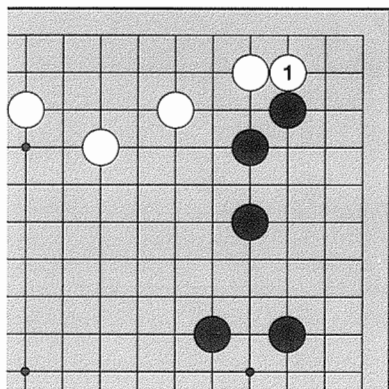


Diagram 10

Diagram 11. If Black doesn't answer, White can extend at 1 and take corner territory in sente. This is worth fifteen points.

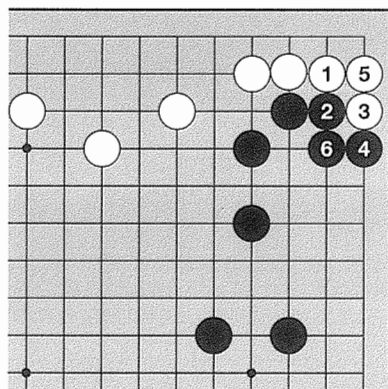
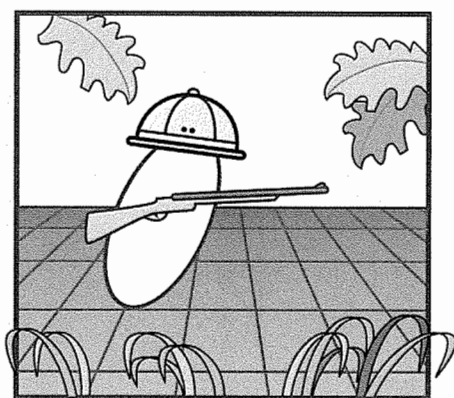


Diagram 11



HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Diagram 12. How big is it to capture one stone with Black 1?

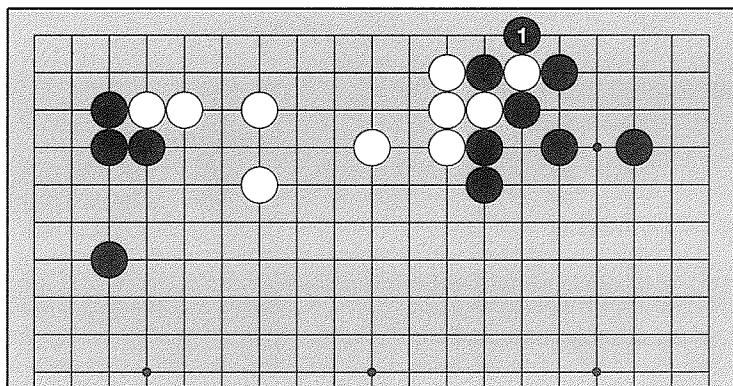


Diagram 12

Diagram 13. The Black hane at 1 is sente, reducing White's territory in the sequence to 6. (If White blocks at 3 with White 2, Black gets a picnic ko – that is, a ko where he stands to gain while risking little or nothing – with the cut at 2.)

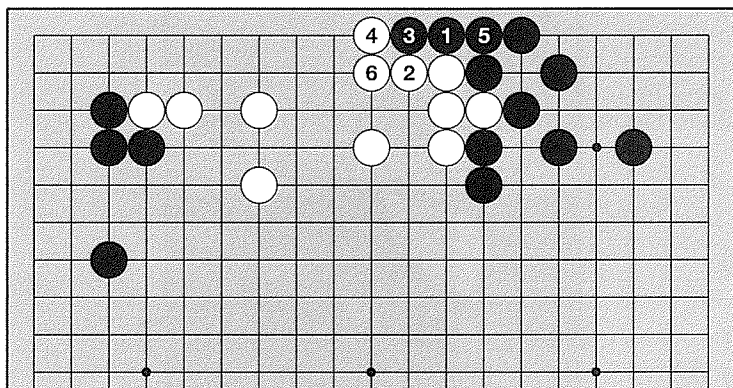


Diagram 13

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Diagram 14. If White captures with 1, her territory increases and later she has the hane sequence to F in sente. White 1 is worth fourteen points. Moves like this, capturing a stone on the edge, are generally worth over ten points.

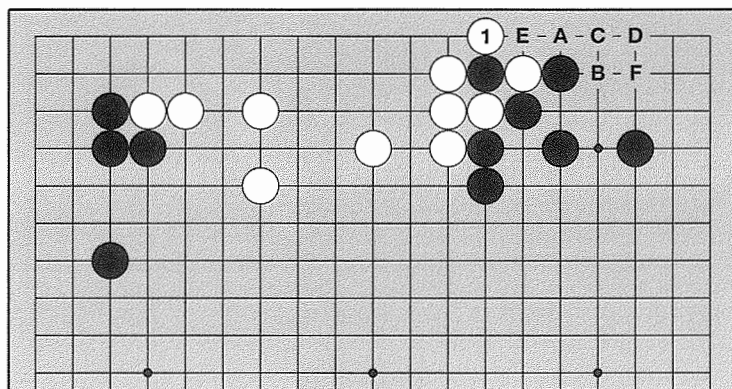


Diagram 14

Diagram 15. From the second line on the side, Black plays the large knight's move on the first line at 1. This endgame move is called the monkey jump. The monkey jump is a useful endgame move when it is sente, and bigger alternative endgame moves on the second line are gote.

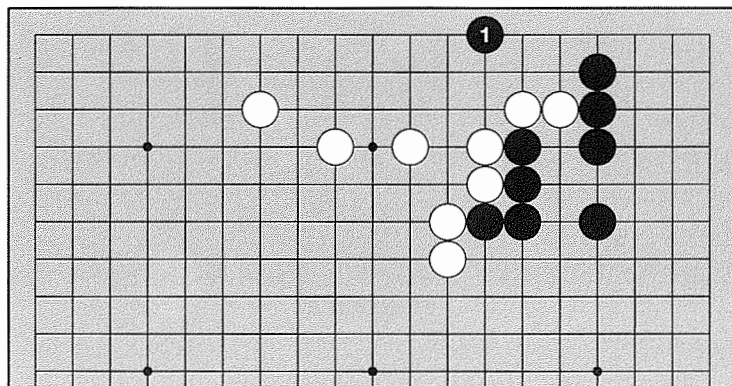


Diagram 15

The Endgame

HUNTING BIG ENDGAME

Diagram 16. White should respond with the diagonal on top at 2. In the sequence to 8, Black reduces White's territory in sente.

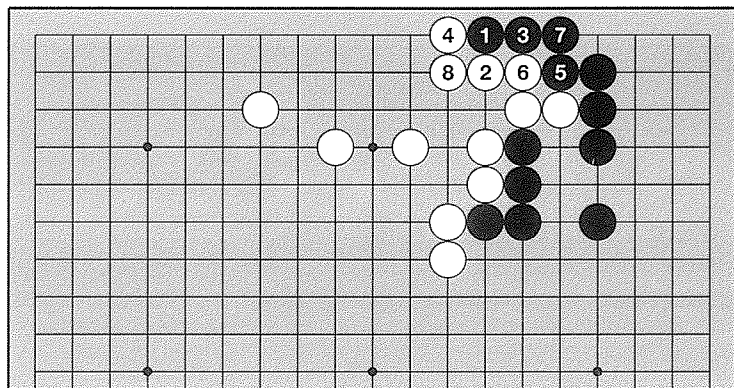


Diagram 16

Diagram 17. If Black doesn't play the monkey jump, a White play at 1 is big reverse sente. Next the hane at A is White's sente. The monkey jump is usually worth eight or nine points.

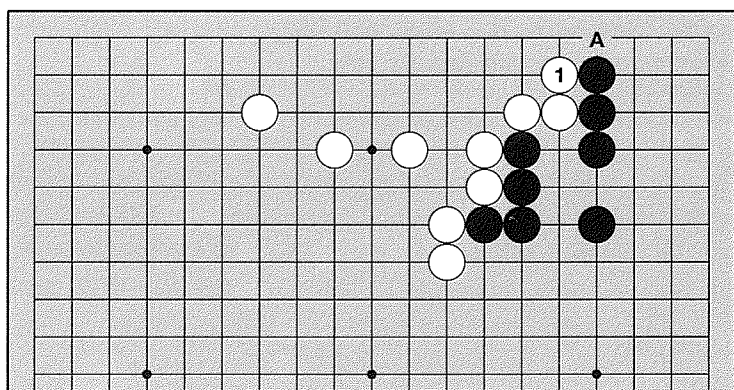


Diagram 17

MORE EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

If you are curious how we arrived at fifteen points in our earlier example of the endgame following the kite, here's the procedure step by step. (But for common endgame plays, you may want to just keep in mind approximately what they are worth rather than do this kind of involved calculation.)

Diagram 1. How big is Black 1?

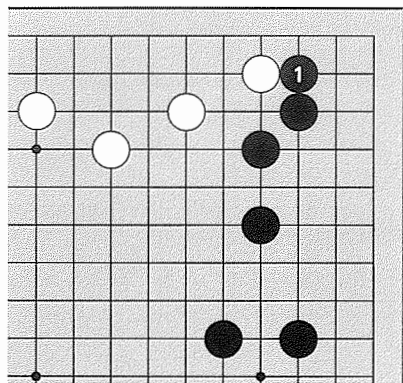


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. Following up, Black can play at 1. If White blocks at 2, Black at 3 catches the white stone. This follow-up is not sente; White doesn't have to respond to Black 3.

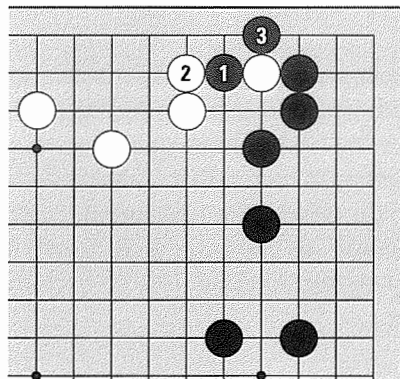


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. The border still isn't complete, so following up again, Black can play the hane on the first line. White blocks at 2, and Black connects at 3 (instead of connecting, there is some ko potential for Black if he cuts at 4, but in this ko Black stands to lose something too, so for the purpose of calculation, let's ignore the ko possibility.) White has to connect at 4 to prevent a Black cut, so this follow-up is sente. (Note the border still isn't 100% complete, but you can assume White will play at A in sente and Black will answer at B.)

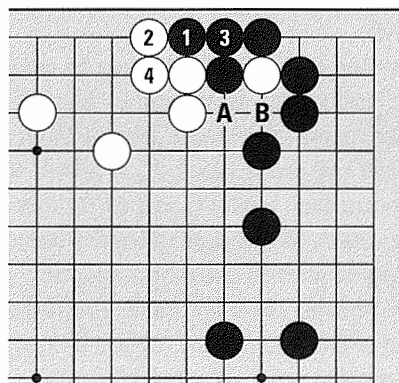


Diagram 3

The Endgame

MORE EXTRA FOR EXPERTS

Diagram 4. Going back a bit, Black's follow-up in *Diagram 2* was gote, so we have to calculate its value and subtract half from our grand total. At this stage if White plays first, she can play at 1. Later on, White follows up with the sente hane-connection. (You can assume Black will play at A in sente later and White will answer at B.)

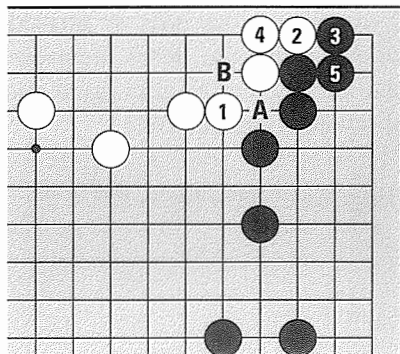


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. If Black plays first, he clamps at 1 and catches a stone at 3. Later on, Black can follow up with a hane-connection. Comparing *Diagrams 4* and 5, Black has gained five points and destroyed five potential points. So the follow-up in *Diagram 2* is worth ten points. Keeping that in mind, let's go back to the beginning.

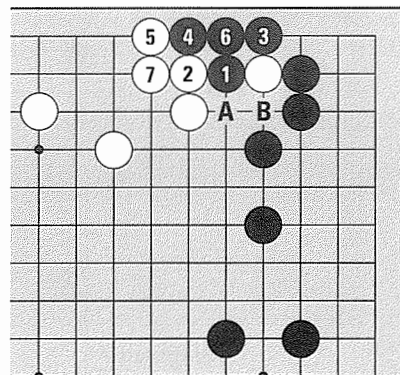


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. If White pushes in at 1, later the sente follow-up is White 2, Black blocks, and White plays the hane-connection. (You can assume the sente Black A, White B to complete the boundary later.) Comparing this result with *Diagram 3*, White has gained nine points, and destroyed eleven potential points. The swing is 20 points. Now we have to subtract half the value of the gote follow-up, or five points, giving this move a total value of 15 points.

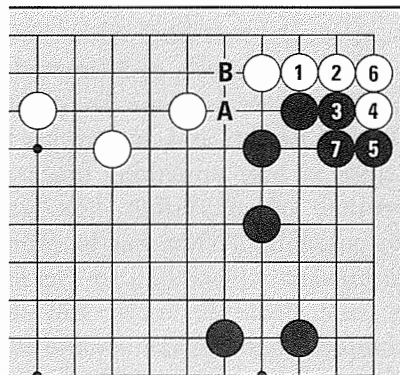
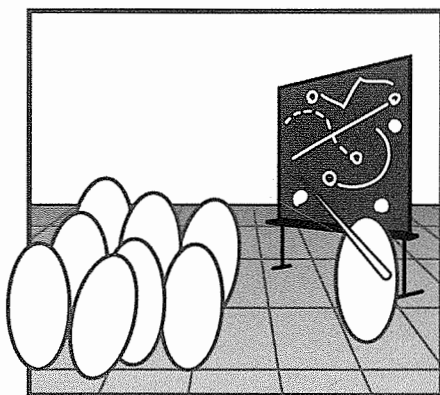


Diagram 6

ENDGAME GUIDES

1. FIRST, LOCATE THE BIG ENDGAME. YOU'LL NEED TO BE ABLE TO CALCULATE THE SIZE OF ENDGAME MOVES TO KNOW WHAT'S REALLY BIG. LOOK TO THE EDGES.
2. DEVISE A PLAN TO TAKE AS MANY OF THE BIG ENDGAME MOVES AS POSSIBLE, BY TAKING AND KEEPING SENTE. BE SURE TO GET THE DOUBLE SENTE ENDGAME.
3. ENDGAME MOVES RELATED TO A GROUP'S BASE ARE ESPECIALLY URGENT.
4. WATCH YOUR LIBERTIES.
5. WATCH THE SAFETY OF YOUR STONES.
6. SAVE THE ENDGAME FOR THE ENDGAME.



Endgame Guides

1. LOCATE THE ENDGAME FIRST.

Diagram 1. When hunting for big endgame, look to the edges. Playing vague moves in the center usually doesn't do much to enlarge or reduce territory. In this diagram, there are three endgame moves on the edges at A, B, and C. Which one would you play first?

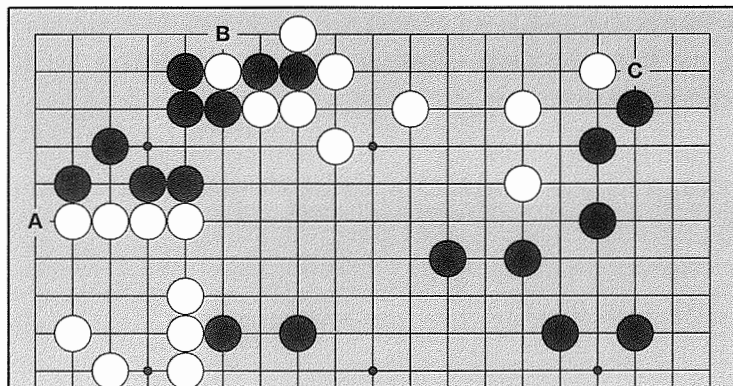


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. None of these endgame plays is sente, so, it's correct just to play the largest move first. Blocking at Black 1 is the biggest. A move at A is two points in gote and should be played at the very last stage of the endgame. B is worth twelve points, a little smaller than Black 1. After Black 1, if White captures the two black stones at B, Black can catch one stone at C.

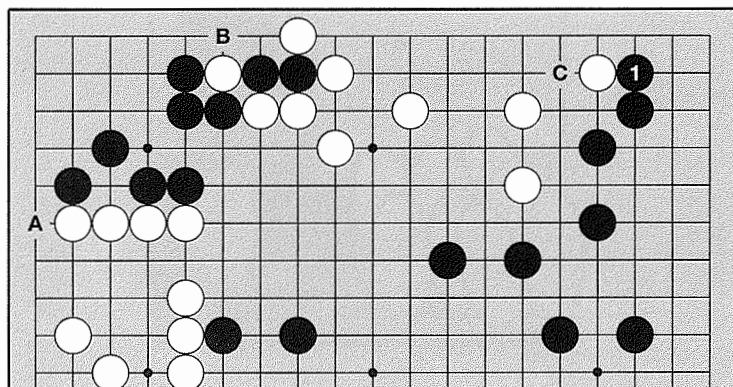


Diagram 2

2. TAKE AND KEEP SENTE, AND GET THE DOUBLE SENTE ENDGAME.

Diagram 1. How should Black play the endgame here?

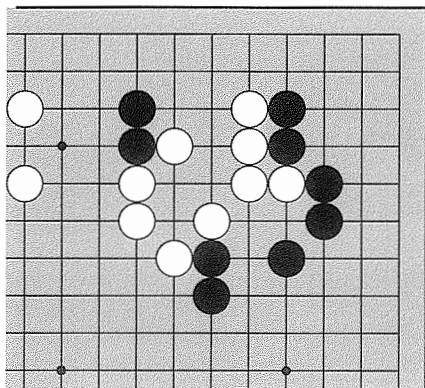


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. The hane-connection at 1 and 3 is big, but it's gote.

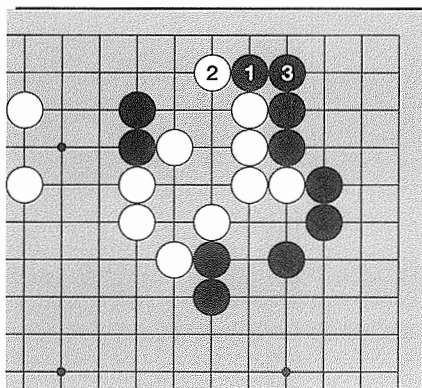


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. Here, extending at 1 is keeps sente. When White blocks at 2, next Black can play the hane-connection at 3 and 5, forcing White 6. It's good endgame technique to finish here in sente and then play somewhere else.

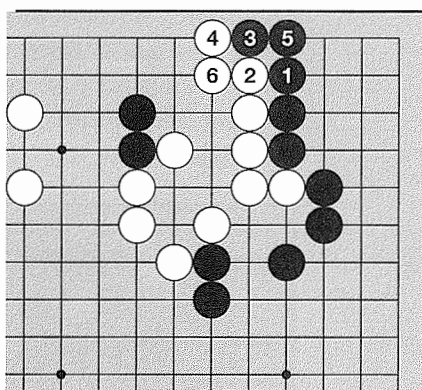


Diagram 3

Endgame Guides

3. ENDGAME MOVES RELATED TO A GROUP'S BASE ARE ESPECIALLY URGENT.

Diagram 1. There are two big endgame moves at A and B. From a local point of view they're the same size, but in this case B is bigger and should be played first.

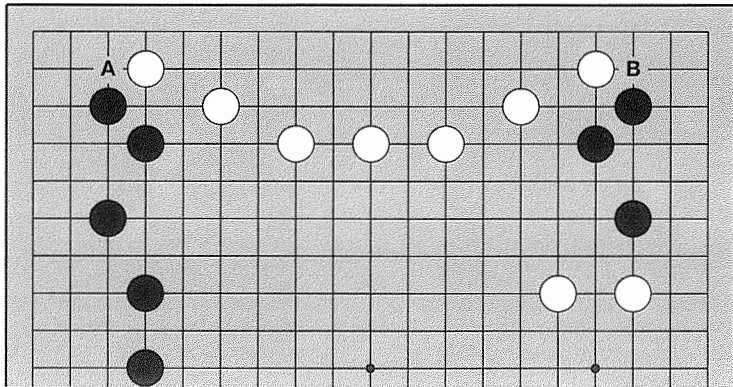


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If Black blocks at 1, White pushes in at 2, threatening his base. If Black blocks at 3, White peeps at 4, a move that takes Black's base away. If Black connects at A, White can connect underneath at B and the life of Black's whole group is at stake.

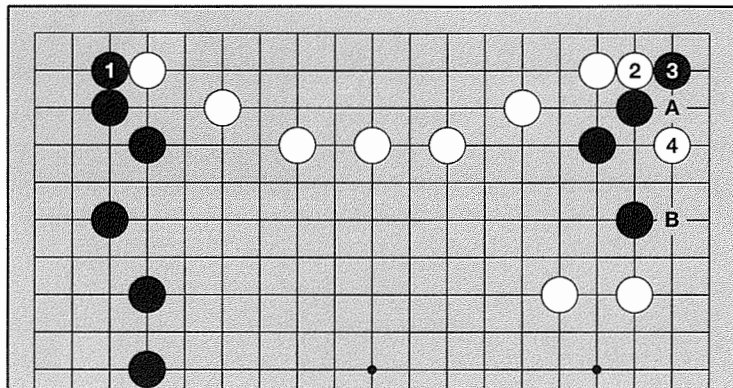


Diagram 2

3. ENDGAME MOVES RELATED TO A GROUP'S BASE ARE ESPECIALLY URGENT.

Diagram 3. Black should hurry to block at 1, an endgame move that also secures the corner group's base. If White pushes in at 2, Black can play elsewhere without any worries.

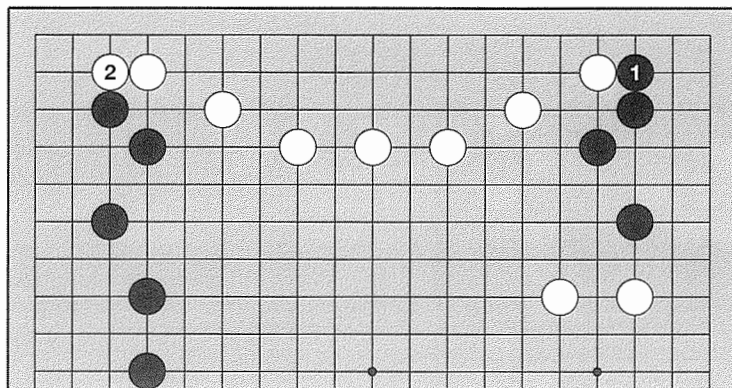
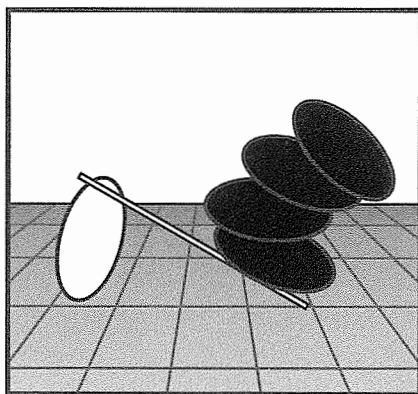


Diagram 3



Endgame Guides

4. WATCH YOUR LIBERTIES.

Diagram 1. Right now, White's corner is completely secure territory.

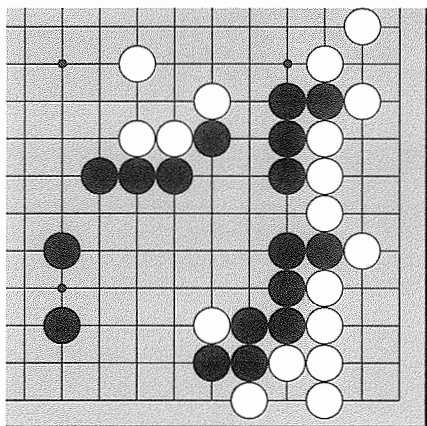


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. What if White plays the endgame sequence to 6? It looks like White played good sente endgame moves, but she has to be careful since she is filling her liberties. If White now plays elsewhere –

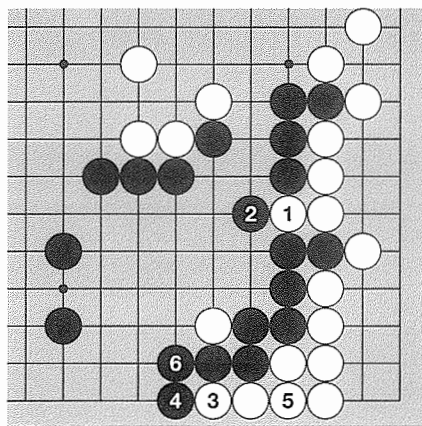


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. Black can cut at 1. Because all White's liberties are blocked, her position can be destroyed.

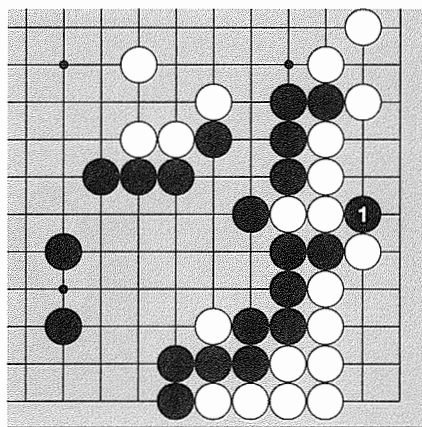


Diagram 3

4. WATCH YOUR LIBERTIES.

Diagram 4. If White captures the cutting stone with 2 and 4, Black can pick off the stones on the lower side.

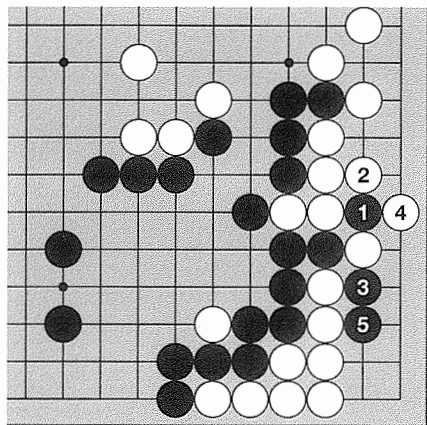


Diagram 56

Diagram 5. White needs to play the tiger's mouth at 2 to save the corner. But Black can still catch four white stones with the cut at 3.

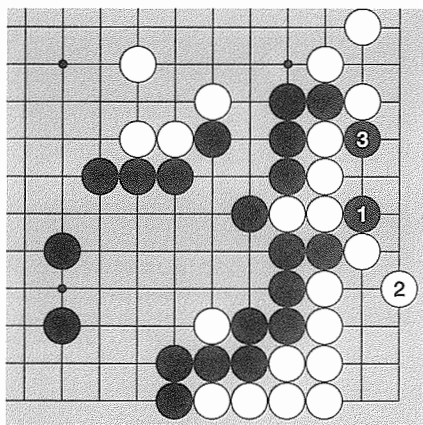


Diagram 57

Diagram 6. Because of the cut at B, White has to keep a liberty open. White can only play one of the sente endgame moves in this area, either at 1 or at A.

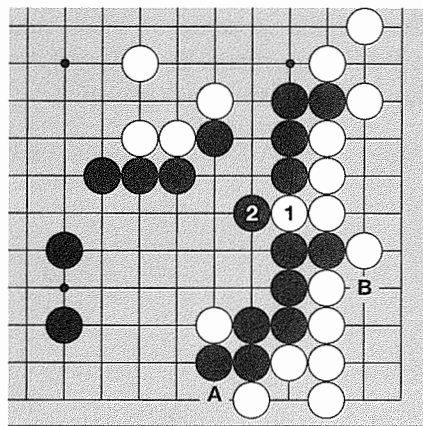


Diagram 6

Endgame Guides

4. WATCH YOUR LIBERTIES.

Diagram 7. It looks like Black has eight points guaranteed in the corner, but White can take advantage of the fact that Black has no outside liberties.

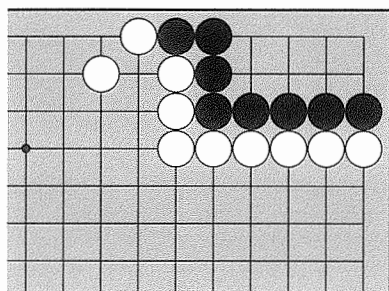


Diagram 7

Diagram 8. Many times at the very end of the game, White finds the clever play at 1. If Black makes an eye at 2, then White can make dual life with 3 and 5, and Black doesn't get any territory here.

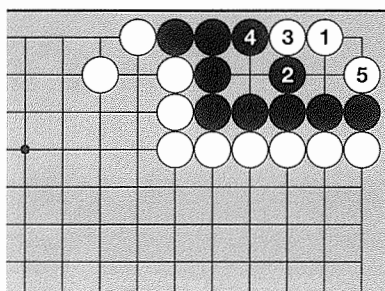


Diagram 8

Diagram 9. White can also play at 1. After White 5, if Black then plays A, White has made dual life in sente. If Black doesn't play, White can throw in at A and start a ko for the life of the black group.

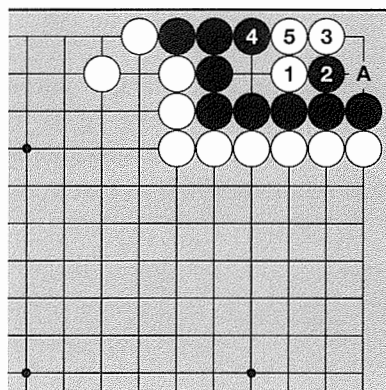


Diagram 9

4. WATCH YOUR LIBERTIES.

Diagram 10. If Black plays the hane-connection at 1 and 3, it looks like the corner has no weakness. But as you've probably guessed, that isn't so. Black has filled in an important liberty.

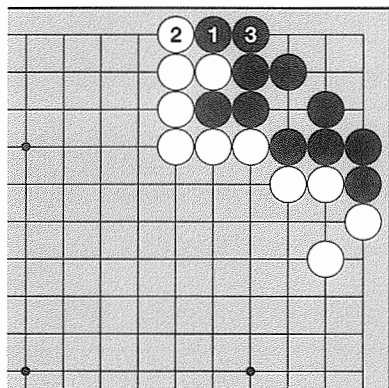


Diagram 10

Diagram 12. Black's corner looks strong, with an imposing tiger's mouth shape – but now that Black's liberties are all filled, he has a deadly weakness.

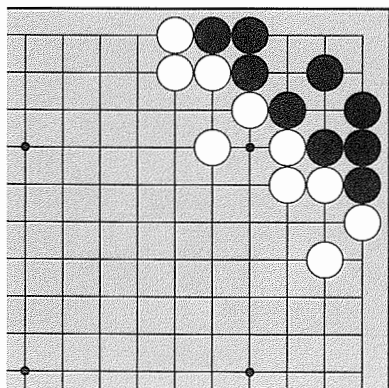


Diagram 12

Diagram 11. If White plays at 1, White can make dual life. If Black plays atari at 2, White extends at 3. If Black plays atari at 3, White extends at 2. That's why Black's territory isn't complete unless he makes another move in the corner in *Diagram 10*.

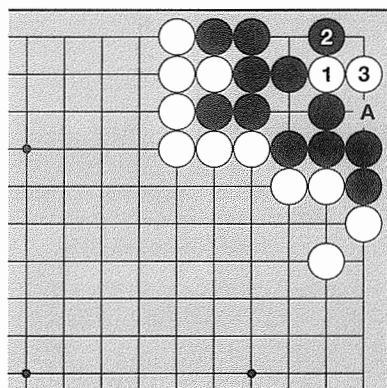


Diagram 11

Diagram 13. White can threaten to capture three stones in a snapback by playing at the 2-1 point. When Black connects at 2, White can start a ko with the throw-in at 3.

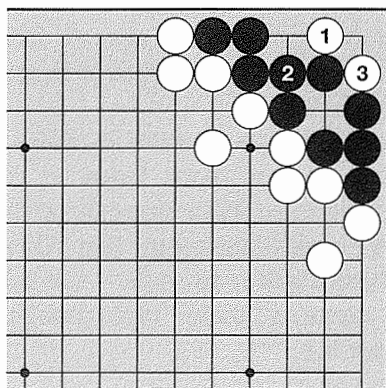


Diagram 13

5. WATCH THE SAFETY OF YOUR STONES.

The endgame is not the stage of life and death, but if you're careless, stones may suddenly die.

Diagram 1. Black would like to prevent White from jumping in at A. Where should Black play?

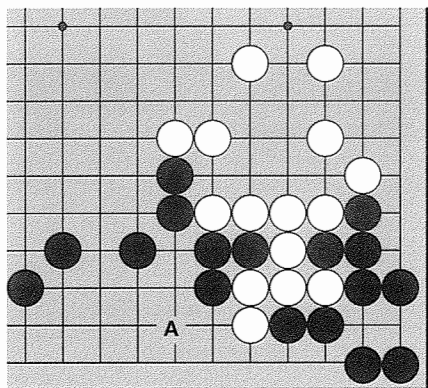


Diagram 1

Diagram 2. If Black blocks at 1, White can play the hane-connection at 2 and 4 in sente. When Black connects at 5, the lower side territory is complete, but playing this way is actually a terrible mistake.

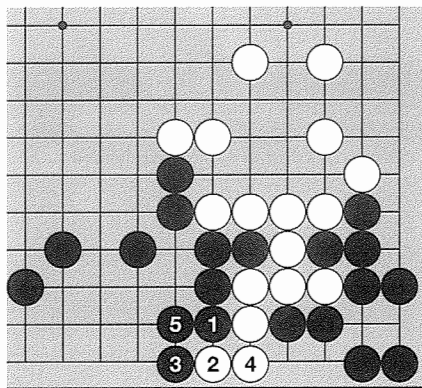


Diagram 2

Diagram 3. Next, White can just push in at 6, and Black's group in the corner suddenly can't make two eyes. (If Black A, White can play the throw-in at B, making this eye false.)

Obviously, this is disaster for Black. The problem is that Black failed to realize that the marked white stone threatens the corner group. (This means that White can play here anytime in sente – the marked white stone is “there” even though you can't see it.)

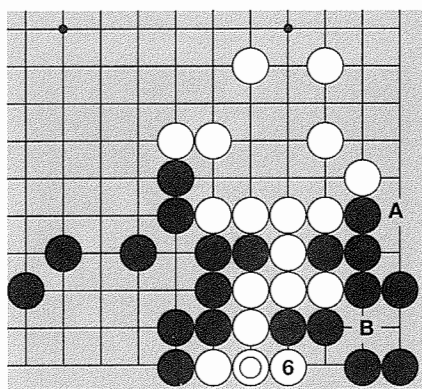


Diagram 3

5. WATCH THE SAFETY OF YOUR STONES.

Diagram 4. Here, Black should pull back a little at 1. If White plays 2, Black blocks at 3.

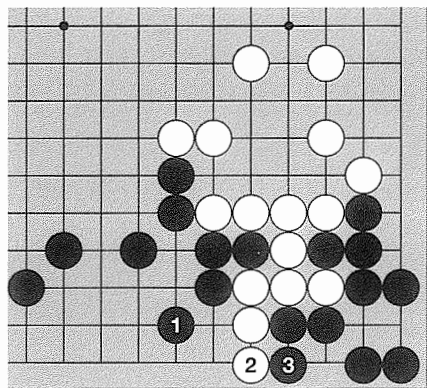


Diagram 4

Diagram 5. What if White plays at 2 here?

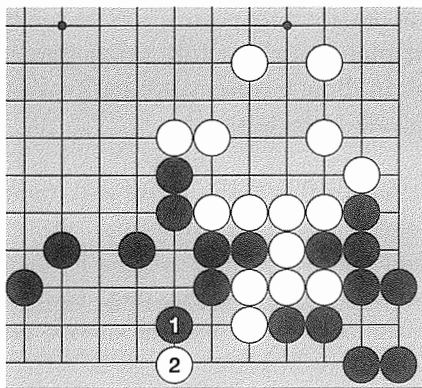


Diagram 5

Diagram 6. Trying to cut at 3 is bad. Next White plays at 4. (Remember this stone was always there, even though you couldn't see it.) If Black connects at A, the corner dies at B. So Black must play at B, and White takes the stone at A, a loss for Black. With 3, Black needs to block calmly at C.

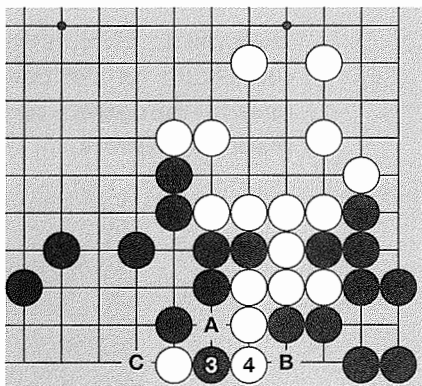


Diagram 6

Endgame Guides

6. SAVE THE ENDGAME FOR THE ENDGAME.

Given the way humans play Go, using the concepts of “sente” and “gote” is very useful. However, speaking very technically no move is really “sente” – except in the sense that a move can contain a threat. You’re never required to answer a “sente” move, you can always play somewhere else. Even if your opponent plays a small sente endgame move that threatens to destroy fifty points, you do not have to answer, so we could say in that case her small sente play is really a fifty-point gote play. However, it’s not really necessary or useful to think in these terms, except perhaps as a reality check when you’re considering playing an endgame move too early.

It’s also possible that a move you make contains a threat and so in that sense is sente, but the threat is so small that your opponent doesn’t answer it. In this case the “sente” play turned out to be “gote”, because it was played too early. The threat contained in a sente play should correspond to the stage you’re at in the game – that is, a sente play that threatens to make or destroy just one or two points should be made when there are just one- and two-point moves left.

Even if the threat is large, you don’t want to play your sente endgame before the endgame starts, because you may lose an opportunity to invade an area that is not yet secured, or pressure stones that aren’t yet settled.

Diagram 1. Here, it’s too early for White to play this hane-connection on the first line. Black’s replies make him too thick on the outside, shutting the door on a future invasion of Black’s framework.

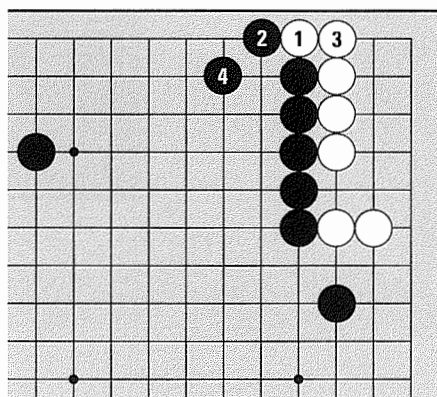


Diagram 1

HERE ARE 8 QUESTIONS ON THE ENDGAME. TRY TO SOLVE EACH PROBLEM BEFORE YOU TURN THE PAGE.

SCORING:

7 – 8: EXCELLENT

6: GOOD

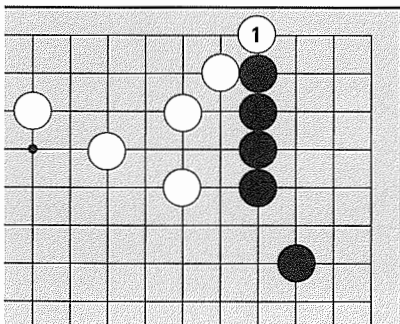
4 – 5: AVERAGE

1 – 3: REVIEW THIS CHAPTER

QUESTION 1:

White 1 is:

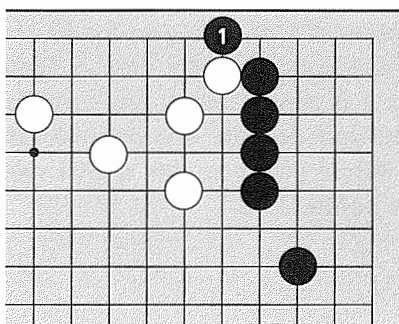
- 1) double sente 3 points
- 2) gote 3 points
- 3) sente 3 points
- 4) sente 4 points



QUESTION 2:

Black 1 is:

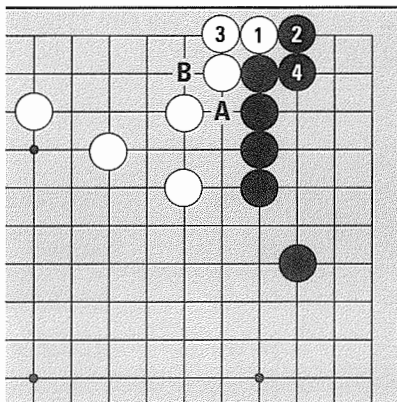
- 1) double sente 3 points
- 2) sente 3 points
- 3) reverse sente 3 points
- 4) reverse sente 4 points



ANSWER:

3) SENTE 3 POINTS.

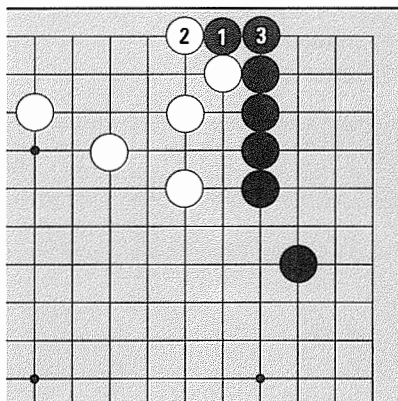
Black will have to connect at 4 to keep the corner territory, so White 1 is sente. In comparison with Black playing here first, White destroys two points and makes one point, for a total value of three points (don't count a point at B, because when Black plays at A, White will have to connect there).



ANSWER:

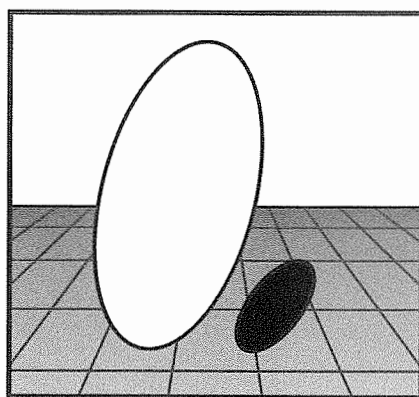
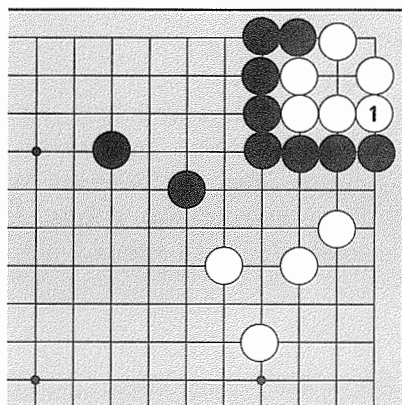
3) REVERSE SENTE 3 POINTS.

White doesn't have to play after Black connects at 3, so it is gote for Black. But a White endgame play here is sente, so Black 1 is reverse sente. Black makes two points and destroys one point compared to a White play here, for a total value of three points.



QUESTION 3:

How big is White 1?

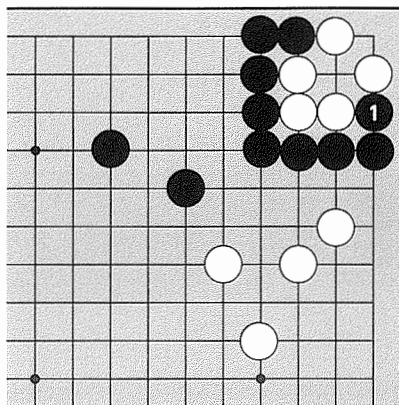


Endgame: Test Yourself

ANSWER:

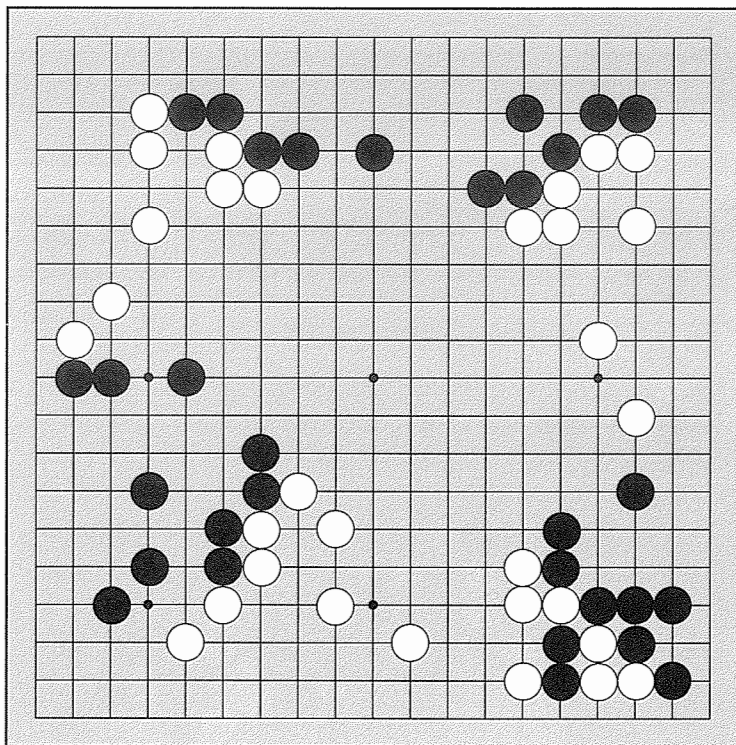
14 POINTS.

If Black plays at 1 here, he kills White's group and makes 12 points, also, he prevents White from making two points, for a total value of 14 points.



QUESTION 4:

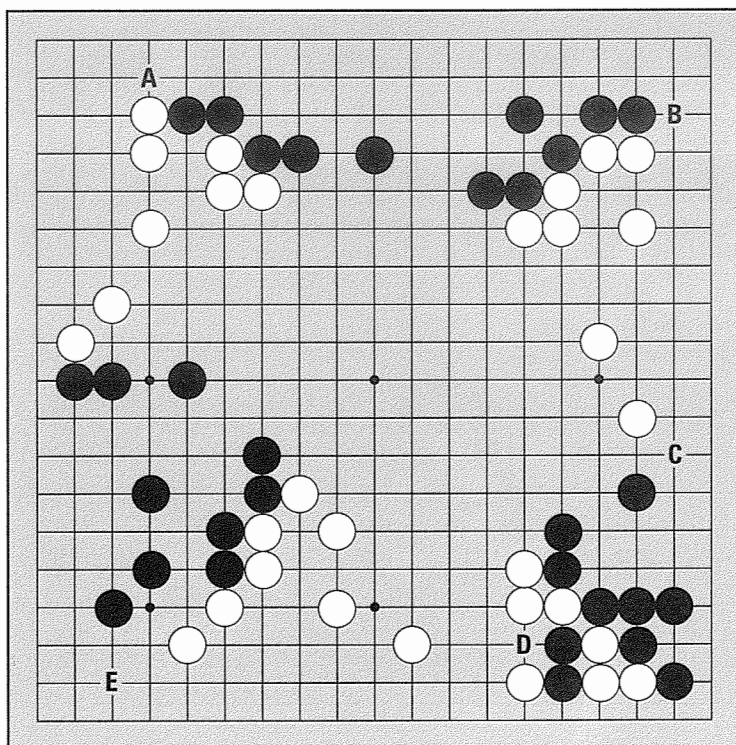
This game has reached the endgame stage. It's White's turn to play. Can you locate five big endgame moves?



Endgame: Test Yourself

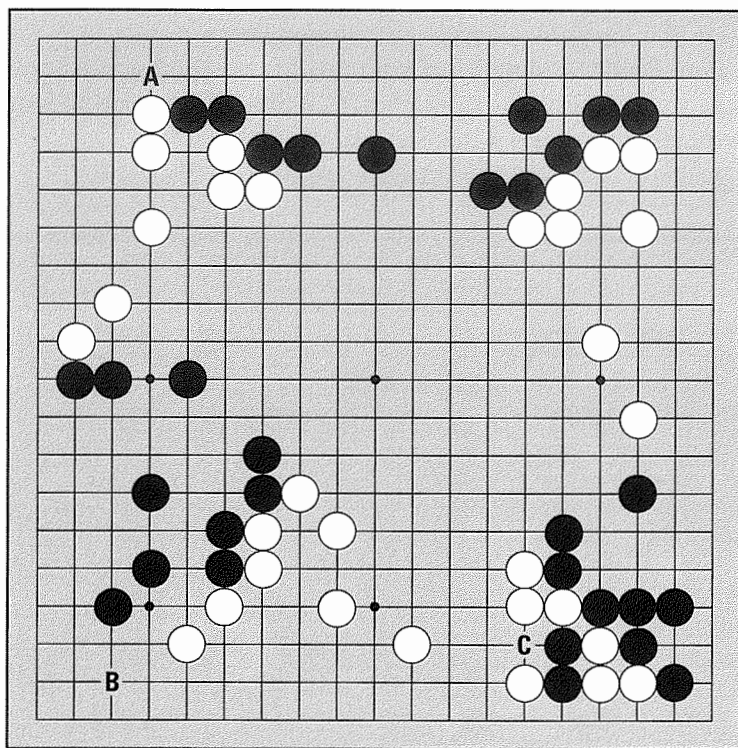
ANSWER:

Big endgame moves are usually along the edges, where two incomplete territorial borders meet. Here, five big endgame moves are at A through E.



QUESTION 5:

Between A, B, and C, which move should White play first?



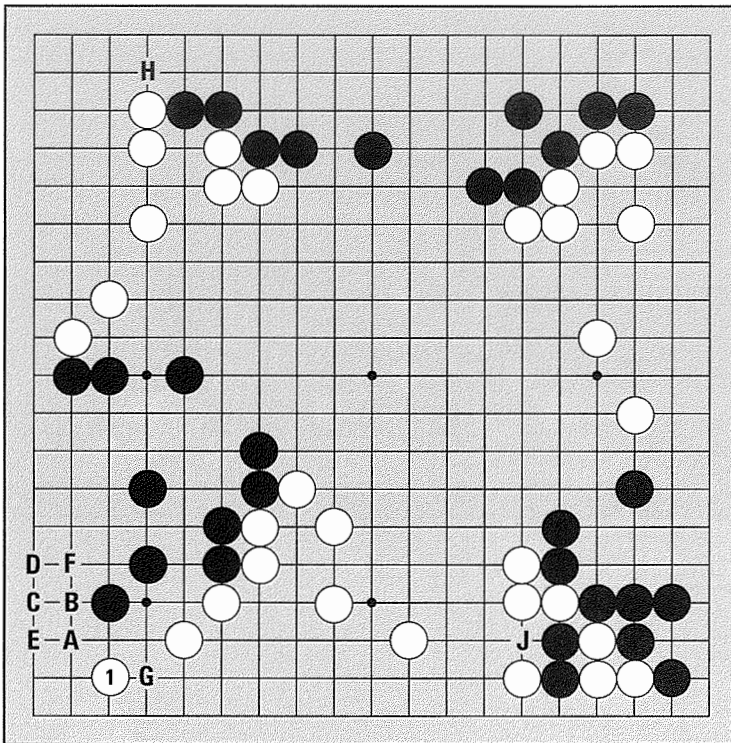
Endgame: Test Yourself

ANSWER:

None of these moves are sente, so White should play these large gote plays in order of size. White 1 and H are about the same.

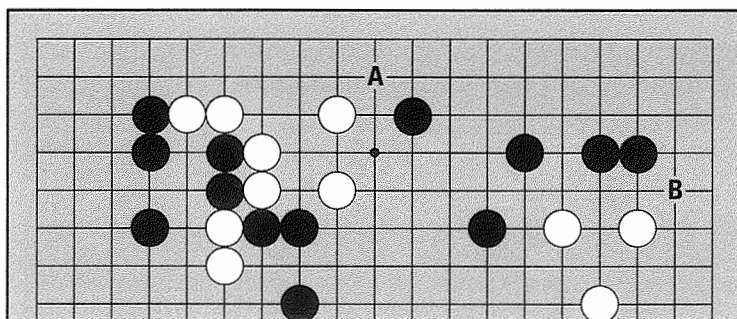
Previously in the Endgame chapter we saw that White 1 is worth about twenty points – in the later sente follow-up, White can play the sequence to F. This is a huge difference compared to if Black plays first at G. This is really a prize endgame move.

Also previously in the Endgame chapter we counted that a play at H is worth 19 points. Capturing two stones and rescuing three by playing J is worth 15 points (notice that it's the smallest endgame move among the three choices, although you may be tempted to give it unwarranted importance because it involves capturing stones).



QUESTION 6:

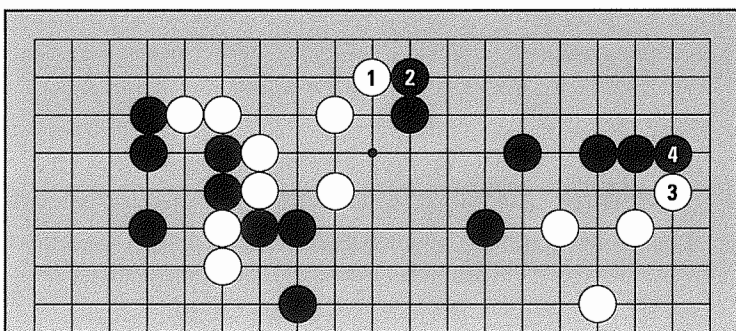
It's White's turn to play. Which endgame move should she play first – A or B?



Endgame: Test Yourself

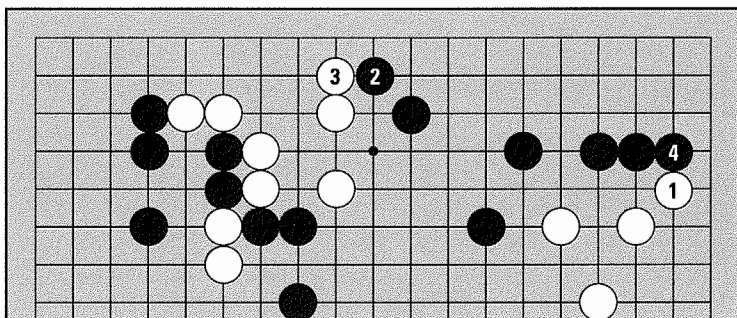
CORRECT:

White should hurry to play endgame moves related to a group's base. White 1 protects her group in sente. Next, she can get the other endgame move with 3 anyway.



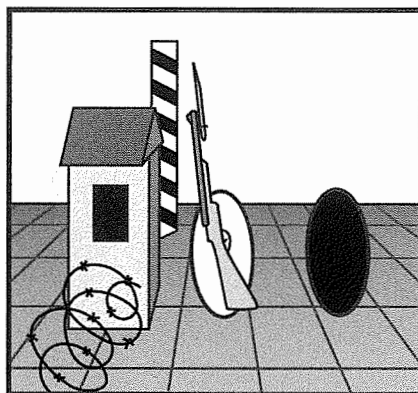
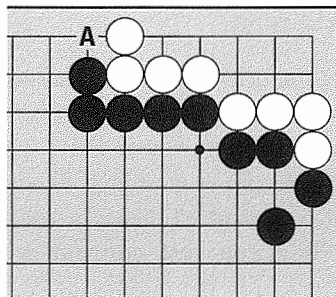
WRONG ORDER:

If White plays at 1 here, it looks like sente, but Black can seize this opportunity to play at 2. White needs to respond to protect her group, so then Black can answer at 4.



QUESTION 7:

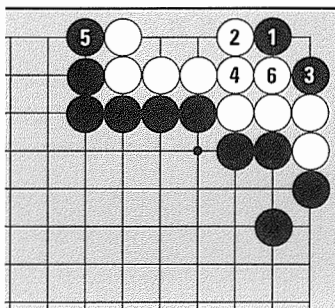
Does White need another move here to secure the corner territory?
What about if the liberty at A is blocked?



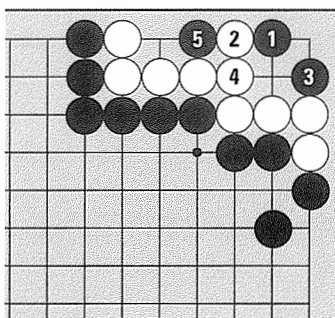
Endgame: Test Yourself

ANSWER:

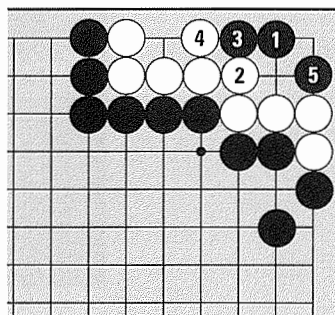
White doesn't need to play another move here right now. If Black tries something funny at the 2-1 point, White can play at 2. If Black plays at 3, trying to create a snapback, White can just connect at 4. If Black fills the liberty at 5, White can put the two stones in atari.



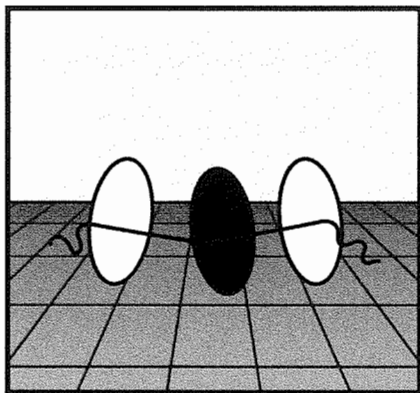
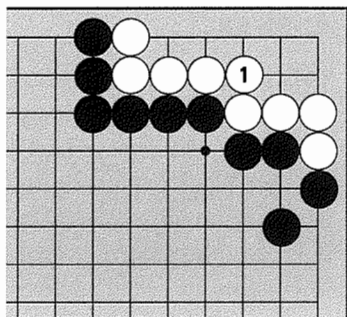
But if the liberty is filled, Black can play 5 here, and this position becomes dual life. No one gets territory in dual life. (But do note that at the very end of the game, White can play at A, capturing one stone, and getting one point.)



If White plays at 2 here, Black can still make dual life in the sequence to 5. This is one point worse for White though, since in this dual life White doesn't capture a stone. (If White 4 at 5, Black still makes dual life with 5 at 4.)



How big is connecting at White 1?

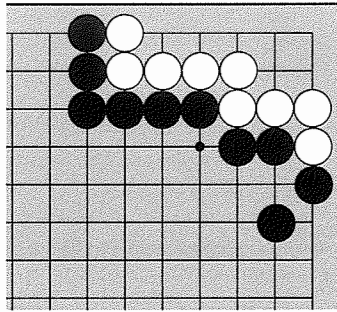


Endgame: Test Yourself

ANSWER:

This is an interesting calculation which is not as easy as it might seem at first. Remember though a game will rarely hinge on whether you are off by a point or two in your endgame calculations. It's much more important to see that Black can make dual life here unless White plays, than to calculate precisely how many points it is.

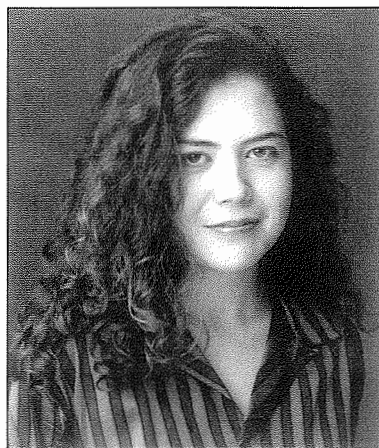
If White plays here, it looks like she gains seven points, but actually, she only gains six. That's because White has one point guaranteed in the corner already, since if Black makes dual life, White will capture one stone. White 1 doesn't destroy any potential Black points, so the value is $6 + 0 = 6$. Looking at it the other way, if Black plays first, he doesn't gain any points, but destroys six potential points, for a total of $0 + 6 = 6$.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

JANICE KIM was born in Illinois in 1969. She entered the professional dan ranks in Korea in 1987, the only Westerner ever to do so. She won the Fuji Women's Championship in 1984, took second place in the World Youth Championship in 1985, and third place in the EBS Cup in 1994. In 2003 she was promoted to 3 dan, the highest rank ever awarded to a woman player by the Korean Go Association.

A graduate of New York University, Ms. Kim currently lives in California with husband Bruce and son Malachi, where she teaches and writes about Go, and runs an internet-based Go company at www.samarkand.net.



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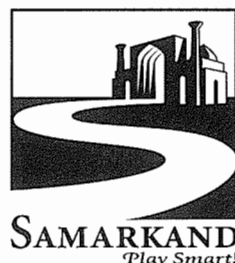
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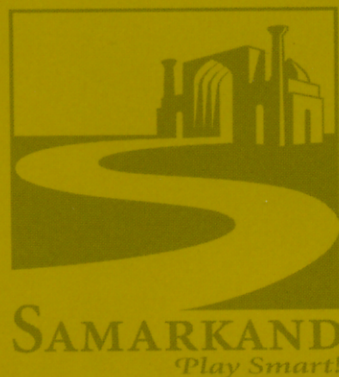
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